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*AMERICAN LITERATURE SERIES*

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A COLLEGE BOOK OF  
*American Literature*

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VOLUME I

*From Beginnings  
to the Middle  
of the  
Nineteenth Century*

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ELLS, POUND, AND SPOHN'S  
A COLLEGE BOOK OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, I

M. P. 5

MADE IN U S A

## *-- Preface --*

IN THE preparation of this collection of material for survey courses in the study of American literature, the editors have kept in mind the following large objectives:

First, that the material included should represent, as fully and adequately as possible, the significant utterances of the spokesmen of our life since the first settlements within the limits of the United States. It has become increasingly apparent that if we would understand the deeper spirit of our people, their ideals and institutions, we must begin at the beginning with a study of the Puritan and pioneer attitudes and must gain some understanding of the controversies between the Federalists and Antifederalists which culminated in the formation of the Union and the Constitution. It is equally apparent that a chief interest of present-day students is in the many-sided expression of their own time as represented in the writings of very recent or still living authors with their frankly appreciative, experimental, or iconoclastic attitudes and their wide range of literary forms. And between these chronological extremes there stands the lasting traditional interest in the supreme flowering of Romanticism, in the subsequent development of Realism, and in the recognition of the forces that brought about the so-called Machine Age. All the phases of our literary development have had careful consideration and an effort has been made to combine sections which embody reflections of the political and social history of the age with those which embody their authors' best literary art, without allowing either tendency to go to an extreme.

Second, balanced variety and tolerance for many different emphases. It is recognized that, in accord with the marked diversity of critical approaches to American literature, individual teachers like to emphasize widely different aspects of the subject, and provision has been made to this end. It is much easier for one instructor to omit what he does not think important than for another instructor to have his students read material "outside" what he would prefer to have in the anthology. Whether it is wished to emphasize Puritanism, the Frontier, the Revolution, Romanticism, Realism, or Naturalism and whatever one's critical preferences and approaches, most teachers will find the present work adequate. The editors have brought to the making of this book the practical results of long teaching experience which has shown them not only what students like and dislike but also has shown them what material lends itself to interesting, significant, and effective teaching.

Third, suggestive editorial work which results in a combination of anthology, literary history, and comprehensive guide to interpretation and critical reading. The longer introductions to the seven main sections deal mainly with the back-

grounds out of which the literature grew. The sketches of individual authors are full enough to present the essential biographical and critical points. The bibliographies for each author, in addition to listing the usual general authorities, call attention to many of the special investigations which have enriched the study of our literature. Many headnotes offer, in unobtrusive fashion, suggestions that will help in pointing the way to a better understanding of some particular selections. There is also a minimum of footnote material where such material has seemed of value.

Fourth, an attempt to present the individual and distinctive literary theories and aims of authors as a basis for interpreting and judging their work. Paragraphs on literary theory are included as integral parts of about one hundred of the author-sketches, mainly of those after 1800, when writers became self-conscious craftsmen. The student is thus enabled to measure an author's artistic achievement and to appreciate the author in the light of his own literary standards.

The physical scope of the work allows a more liberal representation than usual of the modern American short story, of our recent poetry and critical writing, and of selected chapters from a large number of significant novels.

The date of publication is given in roman type at the end of selections; the date of writing, if earlier, is in italics.

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*Colonial  
American  
Literature*





## Colonial American Literature

### The First Century, 1608-1708

The tasks and deprivations of life in the early English colonies in America offered little leisure or incentive for production of literature of a high order. Furthermore, as sharers of the cultural tradition of England, the colonists felt no great urge to create a rival literature of their own. When circumstances impelled, they naturally wrote in forms to which they were accustomed and usually for readers at home. Thus began, perhaps, what has been called the "colonial complex," a hampering dependence upon English literary standards and approval which continued with decreasing effect into the nineteenth century.

But this early literature is interesting and important to Americans from its closeness to the lives and experiences of the men and women who wrote it. More than we can realize, American thought and conduct today reflect points of view and patterns of reasoning which antedate the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> None of us, whether of colonial stock or descended from later migrations, has wholly escaped the influence of the "Mayflower Compact," Winthrop's "Little Speech on Liberty," "Poor Richard's Almanac," the "Declaration of Independence," or Crèvecoeur's "What Is an American?" When the United States was invited to enter the League of Nations in 1919, its failure to do so was largely due to Washington's and Jefferson's warnings against entangling foreign alliances, over a century earlier.

Four influences upon American literature, continuing from the colonial period in varying degrees to the present, are those of contemporary or earlier British literature, the middle-class outlook, puritanism, and the frontier. Though most colonial writing impresses us with its home-madeness, like a crudely constructed article of furniture, echoes of Raleigh and the Elizabethan travel books appear in the narratives of John Smith and William Strachey, of Cambridge-bred English Puritan writers in the religious works of Harvard-bred colonials; and of the poets Spenser, Herbert, and Donne in the verses of Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, and the clerical elegists. Most important of all was the influence of the English Bible, in either the Geneva (1560) or the King James (1611) versions, whose dignified and rhythmical language and rich imagery profoundly affected the prose style of William Bradford and his successors. To the hungry imagination of a people who in general abjured fiction and poetry, the Bible supplied not only religious instruction and sacred history but also secular history, tales of intrigue and adventure, primitive folklore and scandalous anecdote, proverbial wisdom, lyric

<sup>1</sup> "Our first literary period fills the larger part of that century in which American civilization had its planting, and we shall never deeply enter into the meanings of American literature in its later forms without tracing it back to its beginnings" (M. C. Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period*, I, 6-7)

poetry, and tender romance. From the Old Testament kings and prophets, queens and courtesans, colonial writers and speakers drew their illustrations quite as often as from classic mythology and history.

Nearly all of colonial literature is the expression of Protestant middle-class Englishmen regarding the two chief concerns of their lives in their new environment: the advancement of their material welfare and the security of their souls through the preservation of true religion.<sup>1</sup> Forming the predominant element in all the colonies, the members of the middle class were thrifty, industrious, and moral in character, with a leaning toward religious dissent. They were also independent and individualistic, tenacious of rights and impatient of restrictions, and essentially practical-minded. Cut off by the Protestant reformation alike from the tradition of the medieval church and the spirit of renaissance humanism, they had little appreciation for the fine arts and esteemed literature mainly as a handmaid to theology or learning. Outside the realm of everyday affairs, they showed a child-like credulity, accepting the literal text of the Bible as final authority in all matters, seeing direct divine intervention or warnings in all unusual occurrences, and similarly linking the Devil with the activities of witches and Indians. This mingling of common sense and credulity appears in the pages of Bradford, Winthrop, Ward, the Mathers, Sewall, and other writers in their period.

Puritanism has to be understood in two distinct senses. One—Puritanism with capital P<sup>2</sup>—refers to a definite religious and political movement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, chiefly limited to Great Britain and the English colonies. Its primary purpose in England was to "purify" the English church by eliminating its episcopal organization and certain forms of worship still retained from Catholicism, but it became involved also in the political struggle to replace the irresponsible Stuart monarchs with a republic or commonwealth. In New England it strove to preserve a pure Calvinistic religion and a commonwealth free from royal or Anglican domination. This restricted historical movement was, of course, very important in connection with the colonial period in America.

The second meaning of puritanism—without the capital—applies to a permanent influence or tendency running throughout British and American thought and literature from the time of John Wyclif or earlier, to the present. When we describe one of our contemporaries as a puritan, or a movement or issue today as puritanical, the term clearly implies a permanent and positive attitude toward life. This may perhaps be defined as a practical moral idealism. Two fundamentals of the puritan's outlook in all ages seem to be: first, that he is disturbed by the pres-

<sup>1</sup> Literature under these two heads includes nearly everything written in colonial America during the first century, beginning respectively with John Smith's *True Relation* (1608) and the Reverend Alexander Whitaker's *Good News from Virginia* (1613).

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this volume the distinction between "Puritanism," the historical movement, and "puritanism," the general attitude toward life, has been preserved in the capitalization.

ence of evils and imperfections in the world he inhabits; and second, that he feels a sense of personal responsibility for doing something to remedy them. He is not only a critic but a reformer. His besetting sin is not hypocrisy, which is a contradiction of his nature, but the narrowness and intolerance of which he is often accused. He pursues certain eminently desirable objectives—usually moral ones—with such single-mindedness that he loses sight of others perhaps equally desirable, such as beauty, good fellowship, and happiness. He is thus the opposite of the conformist or “cavalier,” who is indifferent to deficiencies in a world with which he is in general satisfied, shifts any responsibility for improvement to other shoulders—the church’s or the state’s—and has a more catholic attitude toward the arts and the enjoyment of life.<sup>1</sup> Of the early colonial writers, the roistering Thomas Morton is almost the only one who is not somewhat touched by puritan earnestness and religious seriousness.

When the Puritan movement expired in the eighteenth century, the spirit of puritanism did not, of course, become extinct. Rather, it impregnated the new enthusiastic religions which arose in that century and continued as a living force in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Northern abolitionists showed all the characteristics of puritanism, which have still been in evidence in the crusades for temperance reform and world peace in our own time.

Frontier living conditions—hardships, Indian attacks, sickness, and starvation—are from the beginning reflected in the pages of Smith, Bradford, and Winthrop. Later, as the coast settlements became more secure and more crowded, the lure of better farming land, the quest of furs and lumber, the pressure of debt, and disagreements and dissatisfaction with the social order at home drew many of the younger, poorer, and more restless into the interior. Here, a life exposed to constant danger and often lived under most primitive conditions developed a venturesome, self-reliant, and sometimes lawless frontier class. In contrast with the later frontier, which in the century from 1775 to 1875 leaped from the Alleghenies to the Pacific, real settlement advanced slowly in the hundred and fifty years after Jamestown, extending at only a few points farther than a hundred miles from the coast. Also, this was, as that of the nineteenth century was not, a political frontier, beyond which lay rival French and Spanish colonies, alien in language and religion and hostile in military and commercial ambitions. Between lurked the menace of the savage and stealthy Indians. With its grim record of warfare and devastated settlements, the frontier implied to the colonial period less of adventure and opportunity than of danger and insecurity.

One phase of frontier life is vividly described in Mrs. Rowlandson’s narrative of her sufferings as a captive of the Indians. Mrs. Knight, Ebenezer Cook, and Colonel

<sup>1</sup> For a more extended development of this contrast see Milton [H. M.] Ellis, “Puritanism and Conformism,” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XVII, 306-319 (October, 1918).

Byrd have left satirical accounts of the crudeness and laxity of life in the back country. But of the folk literature of the forest and sea, the tang of its speech, its extravagant yarns, and its racy humor, virtually nothing has been recorded by colonial writers. They were too near to it to regard it as quaint and therefore sufficiently interesting to be worth writing about.

The chief religious sects in the colonies in the seventeenth century—when the rightness of one's beliefs and worship was a vital concern—were the Anglicans or Episcopalians in the South and the Middle Colonies, the several Calvinist sects<sup>1</sup> in New England and elsewhere, and after 1680 the Quakers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Anglicans and Calvinists alike accepted the orthodox belief in Adam's sin and the consequent damnation of his descendants until redeemed by the sacrifice of the Son of God. As to the nature of the redemption, the Christian sects divided. The Anglican adherents generally felt that all who conformed to the teachings and exercises of the church and lived rightly would have the benefits of salvation.

The religious background of the New England writers was Calvinism. To the Calvinist conception, fallen man was inherently base and wicked, and consequently God perforce *elects* certain souls to enjoy an unmerited bliss in heaven, leaving the rest to their just punishment for their original transgression in Adam. Since the elect had been known to God from the beginning of time, and thus predestined, no one could by his own right living and faith be preserved from eternal torment. An incentive for upright conduct and religious devotion, however, was offered in the assurance that since the spirits of the elect act in harmony with God's will, those whose thought and behavior were most godlike were doubtless of the elect. In addition to these Calvinistic doctrines, the Puritans developed the Covenant theory, which "held that after the fall of man, God voluntarily condescended to treat with man as with an equal and to draw up a covenant or contract with His creature in which He laid down the terms and conditions of salvation, and pledged Himself to abide by them. The covenant did not alter the fact that those only are saved upon whom God sheds His grace, but it made very clear and reasonable how and why certain men are selected, and prescribed the conditions under which they might reach a fair assurance of their own standing."<sup>2</sup>

The original Friends, or Quakers, were regarded and treated by Anglicans and Puritans alike as dangerous and revolutionary radicals. Their chief tenet was the "inner light," the presence of direct inspiration from God within the human spirit, as their sufficient guide for conduct and belief. In accordance with this equalitarian

<sup>1</sup> Congregationalists, who predominated in New England, Presbyterians, Calvinist Baptists, French Huguenots, and Dutch Reformed

<sup>2</sup> Perry Miller, "The Puritan Way of Life," in P. Miller and T. H. Johnson, *The Puritans* (1938), 58. This essay is perhaps the best brief interpretation of the Puritan's intellectual, cultural, and religious character. For more extended discussions, see the same writer's "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," in *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXII (1932), 247-300, and his *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1690* (1933).

tenet, they decried such accepted conventions of Christian society as a paid ministry, special buildings and ceremonies for worship, the special sanctity of the Sabbath, military service, capital punishment, reverence for magistrates, and distinctions of class in dress. By protesting against these things in such ways as denouncing ministers in their pulpits, or running unclothed through the streets, some of them shocked and alarmed the magistrates of Massachusetts Bay into severe and cruel repressive measures. After four Quakers had been hanged there, King Charles intervened; and as the stimulus of persecution was removed and able and thoughtful leaders like Penn joined their body, they became an exceptionally stable, orderly, and peaceful sect, noted in Pennsylvania for their philanthropy and their just dealings with the Indians. In literature, their spirit is best shown in the journal of the eighteenth-century Quaker preacher, John Woolman.

Maryland, colonized by Catholic English families, was soon overrun by Protestants from Virginia, and eventually Anglicanism became the state church, but religious toleration was retained there, as also in Rhode Island under the leadership of Roger Williams.

The colonial scene in the seventeenth century was a narrow strip of English settlement along the Atlantic coast from the Savannah River to the Penobscot, cut in two until 1664 by the Dutch colony of the New Netherlands. Aside from the Dutch, the Negroes, and small groups of Swedes and Huguenot French, the population was almost wholly British and very largely English. The great majority were agricultural, raising chiefly tobacco for export in Virginia and Maryland, rice and indigo in Carolina, and grain and general produce in the Middle Colonies and New England. In New England and New York, furs purchased from the Indians were for some time the chief export. Much of the labor on the farms of Pennsylvania and the plantations of Virginia and Maryland was done by indentured servants, from the poorer classes of Great Britain, who sold their services for a varying period averaging about six years, in return for transportation and maintenance. Negro slaves were introduced from the West Indies as house servants and as field laborers, first in the Carolina rice swamps and later in the tobacco fields of Virginia. Immigration to New England was heaviest between 1630 and 1640, to Virginia and Maryland during the next two decades, and to Pennsylvania and New Jersey after 1682. The European wars of the seventeenth century fortunately disturbed the colonies in America very little, and a series of bloody contests with the chief Indian federations during the last third of the century weakened their power and opened new areas for white settlement.

In Virginia, as in Maryland and the Carolinas, advantages of soil and climate and the contour of the land and rivers favored the development of a purely agricultural civilization. The adventurers of the first years were virtually wiped out by disease, starvation, and massacre. Their successors were mainly sturdy middle-class stock,

not greatly different, even in religious predilections, from the New Englanders.<sup>1</sup> Under the leadership of such active Puritans in the Virginia Company and the colony as Sir Edwin Sandys, church attendance was required, a strict code of laws was enforced, and plans were made for an ill-fated college at Henrico as early as 1619. During the English Civil War, however, Virginia, strongly loyal to the King, excluded Puritans, Quakers, and other dissenters from the franchise, though taxed to support the Anglican clergy, and many were banished or left the colony. During most of the seventeenth century the tobacco plantations, averaging less than 200 acres in size, were mainly cultivated by the owners and white indentured servants.<sup>2</sup> Living along navigable rivers, the planters loaded their wares directly on board ship, with the result that towns were few and unimportant. Little manufacture was carried on, and the colonists depended on the mother country and on Dutch and New England traders for supplies. The education of the children was entrusted to their parents and to the church. Governor Berkeley was wont to thank God that in Virginia "there are no free schools or printing presses, and I hope there will be none for a hundred years." A few royalist cavalier families sought refuge in the colony during the Commonwealth, but most of them returned after the Restoration, and the later plantation aristocracy was mainly of middle-class origin. Between 1640 and 1670, the annual immigration of indentured servants exceeded 1200. The mortality among these at first was frightful, owing to the fevers and dysentery prevalent in the tidewater region. The more industrious of the survivors, after serving their term, generally reinforced the middle class by obtaining allotments of land and becoming small planters themselves.

The restrictions of the Navigation Act, coupled with the competition of Negro slave labor after 1680, were disastrous to the yeoman planters. From that period date the large plantations, operated by slaves, and the emigration to North Carolina, Maryland, and Pennsylvania of great numbers of impoverished planters and released white servants. Politically, the history of the colony was largely one of intermittent conflict between the independent planters and the royal governors. The tyrannical rule of Governor Berkeley after the Restoration of 1660, in the interests of the wealthier landowners, led to an armed revolt in 1676 under Nathaniel Bacon, whose untimely death was lamented in the anonymous "Bacon's Epitaph, Made by his Man." Soon afterward, Berkeley was recalled by King Charles, and a new assembly enacted a number of popular reforms. In 1692, the College of William and Mary, second oldest in the colonies, was established at Williamsburg under the auspices of the Anglican church.

South Carolina, dominated by the Huguenots and wealthy planters from the

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Alexander Whitaker, of Henrico Parish, writing to an English friend in 1614, expressed surprise that so few of the Puritan ministers "that were so hot against the surplice and subscription [of religious conformity] came hither where neither are spoken of" (*Dictionary of American Biography*, article on Whitaker).

<sup>2</sup> T. J. Wertenbaker, *The Planters of Colonial Virginia* (1922), 45-54.

British West Indies, was from early times an aristocratic colony. North Carolina, "a vale of humility between two mountains of arrogance," was settled largely by persons from Virginia seeking freedom from the restrictions of the older colony and from the first was very democratic in spirit.

The Puritan colonies in Massachusetts and Connecticut were commonwealths in which the lives of men should be ordered "in harmony with the will of God." Both Plymouth (1620) and Massachusetts Bay (1630), however, were carefully planned in advance to be self-sustaining through the fur trade and other industries. The colonies in Connecticut and Rhode Island grew partly by expansion and partly as a result of disagreement with Massachusetts Bay in religious or political views. For the latter colony, like Virginia, sought to maintain religious unity and exclude or suppress discordant factions. "They were engaged in a difficult and perilous undertaking, begirt by wilderness enemies, and fearful of hostile interference by home authorities. If the venture were to survive . . . common security would not suffer any dispersion of forces or domestic bickerings over authority."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson were exiled to Rhode Island and John Wheelwright to New Hampshire; and Quakers, Anglicans, and even Baptists were fined, deprived of common rights, and harshly treated. In the debate which waxed briefly on the subject of toleration, our sympathies are with Williams rather than his opponent, John Cotton, and the testy Nathaniel Ward, though their policy doubtless saved their colony from the confusion and disunion which caused the downfall of the Puritan republic in England.

Certain democratic ideas prevailed in New England, such as the congregational form of church government, the general meeting of freemen to decide local matters of government, and the distribution of free land to all settlers. The number of freemen was limited, however, by restrictions of church membership and qualifications of property and character, to a small minority of the adult male population. In addition, the early clergy, probably the most learned and able in all our history, exercised as advisers a great degree of control in social and governmental affairs. From these two circumstances originated the "social system" which, combining the "three professions"—the minister, the doctor, and the lawyer—with the richer merchants and landowners into a changing but continuing aristocracy, dominated New England community life for over two centuries. In the democratic New England town meeting everyone had his say, but the final say was generally that of the largest taxpayer.

Compactly settled, with a homogeneous population whose middle-class ambitions and religious devotion both prompted them to industry and frugality, the New England colonists early achieved solidarity and economic self-sufficiency.

<sup>1</sup> V. L. Parrington, *The Puritan Mind* (1927), 19. The toleration of warring religious opinions was not an approved theory in any seventeenth-century European state except the despised Low Countries.



Mostly well educated, they desired their children to continue so; hence in 1636 the Massachusetts Bay settlers founded a Latin grammar school in Boston and chartered a college—Harvard—in Cambridge, and eleven years later required each town of one hundred families to maintain a free grammar school. The poverty of the New England soil turned the attention of the inhabitants to the sea, the returns from which, in fish, shipbuilding, and commerce, were to provide their chief wealth. With prosperity came relaxation of religious fervor and strictness and a decline in the influence of the clergy, against which Cotton Mather strove mightily, recalling attention in his *Magnalia Christi Americana* ("Christ's Great Achievements in America") to the glories of the pristine faith in New England. The Mathers and their friends favored the substitution of the more closely organized Presbyterian form of church government, but the Congregational group held their ground, with the Reverend John Wise as their spokesman in his *The Churches' Quarrel Espoused* (1710) and *A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches* (1717). Two circumstances which helped to lessen the secular power of the clergy were the intellectual decline of their seminary, Harvard, during the long lapse of contact with the universities of Europe; and the yielding of the ministers to the popular frenzy at the witchcraft trials in 1692, when nineteen accused persons were hanged—not burned—in the vicinity of Salem. The overthrow of Governor Andros in 1689 and the new charter of 1691 removed the menace of Stuart interference with the liberties of Massachusetts, but at the cost of a royal governor; and the Dutch sovereigns William and Mary saw to it that toleration was extended to all Protestants and that church membership was eliminated as a qualification for citizenship.

The Middle Colonies entered upon the scene too late to make much contribution to the literature of the first hundred years. By reason of their diversity of racial and religious elements, they were to exert a strong influence in the direction of tolerance and freedom of speech and thought, while their strategic geographical position was to give them much weight in the events of the eighteenth century.

During the first half century, the colonial writers were Englishmen adjusting European ideas to life in the new continent which was to be home for all of them except John Smith and Nathaniel Ward. Their successors in the late seventeenth century were mainly American born, with cultural horizons already limited to the colonial scene.

## 1580 -- John Smith -- 1631

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH illustrates well the boldness, energy, and resourcefulness of the Elizabethan gentleman adventurer who, like Raleigh, could turn from soldiering or affairs of state to describe vividly and vigorously scenes which he had witnessed or enacted. Early left an orphan, he ran away from his guardians in Lincolnshire and at twenty-six, when he joined the Jamestown expedition, had already had enough romantic adventures in many countries for one lifetime. Though he stayed in Virginia only from May, 1607, to October, 1609, during that time he not only took the chief part in exploring the rivers and interior country, establishing practicable relations with the Indians, and keeping the colonists in some semblance of order, but wrote and sent home his first book, *A True Relation*, published in London late in 1607. His activities during the rest of his life, moreover, were mainly concerned with America. He wrote several more books, all summed up in his *General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), returned to explore the New England coast in 1614, and later made several unsuccessful efforts to head a colonizing expedition. He died in London, June 21, 1631.

Smith was fond of the center of the stage, and his exploits doubtless derive some of their picturesqueness from his imagination. His style is usually vivid and straightforward, though his sentences often are loose in structure. In reflective passages he tends to artificial balance of phrases, and sometimes lapses into brief passages of verse. Credit is due to him not only for our best contemporary accounts of the American coast and its inhabitants from Virginia to the Penobscot but also for one of our oldest and most vital romantic legends—that of his purported rescue from death by the Indian princess Pocahontas.

The best edition of Smith's works is that of Edward Arber (1884), re-edited by A. G. Bradley in 1910. This includes his *True Relation* (1608), *A Map of Virginia* (1612), *A Description of New England* (1616), and *New England's Trials* (1620), all assembled in *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624). There are biographies by Bradley (1905), C. D. Warner (1881), E. K. Chatterton (1927), and J. G. Fletcher (1928). Henry Adams, in *Historical Essays* (1891), discusses Smith's veracity as a historian. See also J. M. Morse, "John Smith and His Critics. A Chapter in Colonial Historiography," *Journal of Southern History*, I, 123-137 (May, 1935). Tyler's *History of American Literature, 1607-1676*, I, 18-38, is still the best brief account of his work.

From A DESCRIPTION OF NEW  
ENGLAND

[*Incentives for Colonization*]

The first great need of the colonies was for men, especially tradesmen and agricultural workers, and a considerable section of the earliest literature has been described as "Come to America" propaganda. The different types of appeal—patnotic, economic, religious, and sporting—are well combined by Smith in this passage. The original spelling of Smith's writing has been preserved.

WHO can desire more content that hath small meanes, or but only his merit to advance his fortune, than to tread and plant that ground hee hath purchased by the hazard of his life? If he have but the taste of virtue and magnanimitie, what to such a minde can bee more pleasant than planting and building a foundation for his posteritie, gotten from the rude earth by God's blessing and his owne industrie, without prejudice to any? If hee have any graine of faith or zeale in Religion, what can hee doe lesse hurtfull to any, or more agreeable to God than to seeke to convert those poore salvages to know Christ and humanitie, whose labors with discretion will triple requite thy charge and paines? What so truly suites with honour and honestie as the discovering things unknown, erecting townes, peopling countries, informing the ignorant, reforming things unjust, teaching virtue, and gaine to our native mother-countrie a kingdom to attend her, finde employment for those that are idle because they know not what to doe, so farre from wronging any as to cause posteritie to remember thee, and remembering thee, ever honour that remembrance with praise?

And lest any should think the toile might be insupportable, though these things may be had by labour and diligence, I assure my selfe there are who delight extremely in vaine pleasure, that take much more paines in England, to enjoy it, then I should doe heere<sup>1</sup> to gaine wealth sufficient, and yet I thinke they should not have halfe such sweet content; for our pleasure here is still gaines, in England charges and losse. Heer nature and liberty affords us that freely which in England we want, or it costeth

us dearely. What pleasure can be more, then (being tired with any occasion a-shore, in planting Vines, Fruits, or Hearbs, in contriving their owne Grounds, to the pleasure of their owne mindes, their Fields, Gardens, Orchards, Buildings, Ships, and other works, &c.) to recreate themselves before their owne doores, in their owne boates upon the Sea; where man, woman and childe, with a small hooke and line, by angling, may take diverse sorts of excellent fish, at their pleasures? And is it not pretty sport, to pull up two pence, six pence, and twelve pence, as fast as you can hale and veare<sup>1</sup> a line? He is a very bad fisher [that] cannot kill in one day with his hooke and line, one, two, or three hundred Cods, which dressed and dried, if they be sould there for ten shillings the hundred, though in England they will give more than twentie, may not both the servant, the master, and marchant, be well content with this gaine? If a man worke but three dayes in seaven, he may get more than hee can spend, unless he may be excessive. Now that Carpenter, Mason, Gardiner, Taylor, Smith, Sailer, Forgers,<sup>2</sup> or what other, may they not make this a pretty recreation though they fish but an houre in a day, to take more then they eate in a weeke? or if they will not eate it, because there is so much better choice, yet sell it, or change it, with the fisher men, or marchants, for any thing they want. And what sport doth yeeld a more pleasing content, and lesse hurt or charge then angling with a hooke; and crossing the sweete ayre from Ile to Ile, over the silent streames of a calme Sea? Wherein the most curious may finde pleasure, profit, and content.

Thus, though all men be not fishers: yet all men, whatsoever, may in other matters doe as well. For necessity doth in these cases so rule a Commonwealth, and each in their severall functions, as their labours in their qualities may be as profitable, because there is a necessary mutuall use of all.

For Gentlemen, what exercise should more delight them, then ranging dayly those unknowne parts, using fowling and fishing, for hunting and hawking? and yet you shall see the wilde-haukes give you some pleasure, in

<sup>1</sup> in New England

<sup>1</sup> haul and veer haul in and pay out <sup>2</sup> metal forgers

seeing them stoope (six or seaven after one another) an houre or two together, at the skuls of fish in the faire harbours, as those a-shore at a foule, and never trouble nor torment yourselves with watching, mewung,<sup>1</sup> feeding, and attending them nor kill horse and man with running and crying, *See you not a hawk?* For hunting also the woods, lakes, and rivers afford not onely chase sufficient, for any that delights in that kinde of toyle, or pleasure, 10 but such beasts to hunt, that besides the delicacy of their bodies for food, their skins are so rich, as may well recompence thy dayly labour, with a Captain's pay.

For labourers, if those that sowe hemp, rape, turnups, parsnips, carrats, cabidge, and such like give 20, 30, 40, 50 shillings yearely for an acre of ground, and meat, drinke, and wages to use it, and yet grow rich, when better, or at least as good ground, may be had, and cost 20 nothing but labour, it seems strange to me, any such should there grow poore

My purpose is not to perswade children from their parents, men from their wives, nor servants from their masters onely, such as with free consent may be spared. But that each parish, or village, in Cite or Countrey, that will but apparell their fatherlesse children, of thirtene or fourteen years of age, or young 30 married people, that have small wealth to live on, heere by their labour may live exceeding well provided alwaies that first there bee a sufficient power to command them, houses to receive them, meanes to defend them, and meet provisions for them; for any playce may bee overlain and it is most necessarie to have a fortress (ere this grow to practice) and sufficient masters (as Carpenters, Masons, Fishers, Fowlers, Gardiners, Husbandmen, Sawyers, Smiths, Spinsters, Taylors, Weavers, and such 40 like) to take ten, twelve, or twentie, or as ther is occasion, for Apprentises. The Masters by this may quicklie growe rich; these may learne their trades themselves, to doe the like, to a generall and an incredible benefit, for King, and Countrey, Master, and Servant.

1616

<sup>1</sup> confining in cages

From THE GENERAL HISTORY  
OF VIRGINIA

BOOK III, CHAPTER II

[*Smith's Account of His Captivity*]

Smith's narrative of his adventures and achievements, first printed in *A True Relation*, were considerably expanded in *The General History*, from which the following narrative of his captivity by the Indians is taken

AND now, the winter approaching, the rivers became so covered with swans, geese, ducks, and cranes, that we daily feasted with good bread, Virginia pease, pumpions, and putchamins,<sup>1</sup> fish, fowle, and diverse sorts of wild beasts as far as we could eate them so that none of our tuffaffaty humorists<sup>2</sup> desired to goe for England

But our comaedies never endured long without a tragedie, some idle exceptions being muttered against Captaine Smith, for not discovering the head of Chickahamania River, and taxed<sup>3</sup> by the councill, to be too slow in so worthy an attempt. The next voyage hee proceeded so farre that with much labour by cutting of trees insunder he made his passage, but when his barge could passe no farther, he left her in a broad bay out of danger of shot, commanding none should goe a shore till his returne! Himselfe with two English and two Salvages went up lughier in a canowe, but hee was not long absent, but his men went a shore, whose want of government gave both occasion and opportunity to the Salvages to surprise one George Cassen, whom they slew, and much failed not to have cut of<sup>4</sup> the boat and all the rest

Smith, little dreaming of that accident, being got to the marshes at the rivers head, twentie myles in the desert,<sup>5</sup> had his two men slaine (as is supposed) sleeping by the canowe, whilst himselfe by fowling sought them victuall who finding he was beset with 200 salvages, two of them hee slew, still defending himselfe with the ayd of a salvage his guid, whom he bound to his arme with his garters, and used him as a buckler, yet he was shot in his thigh a little

<sup>1</sup> pumpkins and perisimmons    <sup>2</sup> tuft-taffeta i.e. our snazzy fault-finders    <sup>3</sup> [Smith being] accused    <sup>4</sup> came near cutting off    <sup>5</sup> wilderness, uninhabited territory

and had many arrowes that stucked in his cloathes but no great hurt, till at last they tooke him prisoner

When this newes came to James towne, much was their sorrow for his losse, fewe expecting what ensued

Sixe or seven weekes those barbarians kept him prisoner, many strange triumphes and conjurations they made of him, yet hee so demeaned himselfe amongst them, as he not onely diverted them from surprising the fort, but procured his owne libertie, and got himselfe and his company such estimation amongst them, that those salvages admired him more than their owne Quiyouckosucks

The manner how they used and delivered him, is as followeth

The salvages having drawne from George Cassen whether<sup>1</sup> Captaine Smith was gone, prosecuting that oportunity they followed him with 300 bowmen, conducted by the King of Pamaunkee, who in divisions searching the turnings of the river, found Robinson and Emry by the fire side, those they shot full of arrowes and slew Then finding the Captaine, as is said, that used the salvage that was his guide as his shield (three of them being slaine and divers other so gauld) all the rest would not come neere him Thinking thus to have returned to his boat, regarding them, as he marched, more then his way, [he] slipped up to the middle in an oasie<sup>2</sup> creeke and his salvage with him, yet durst they not come to him till, being neere dead with cold, he threw away his armes Then according to their composition<sup>3</sup> they drew him forth and led him to the fire, where his men were slaine Diligently they chafed his benumbed limbs

He demanding for their Captaine, they shewed him Opechankanough, King of Pamaunkee, to whom he gave a round ivory double compass dyall Much they marvelled at the playing of the fly<sup>4</sup> and needle, which they could see so plainly and yet not touch it, because of the glasse that covered them But when he demonstrated by that globe-like jewell, the roundnesse of the earth and skyes, the spheare of the sunne, moone, and starres, and how the sunne did chase the night round

<sup>1</sup> whether <sup>2</sup> oozy <sup>3</sup> agreement <sup>4</sup> the compass card

about the world continually; the greatnesse of the land and sea, the diversitie of nations, varietie of complexions, and how we were to them antipodes, and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration.

Norwithstanding, within an houre after they tyed him to a tree, and as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him; but the King holding up the compass in his hand, they all laid downe their bowes and arrowes, and in a triumphant manner led him to Orapaks, where he was after their manner kindly feasted, and well used.

Their order in conducting him was thus. Drawing themselves all in fyle, the King in the midst had all their peeces and swords borne before him. Captaine Smith was led after him by three great salvages, holding him fast by each arme; and on each side six went in fyle with their arrowes nocked.<sup>1</sup> But arriving at the towne (which was but onely thirty or fortie hunting houses made of mats, which they remove as they please, as we our tents) all the women and children staring to behold him, the souldiers first all in fyle performed the forme of a bissone<sup>2</sup> so well as could be; and on each flanke, officers as sergeants to see them keepe their orders. A good time they continued thus exercise, and then cast themselves in a ring, dauncing in such severall postures, and singing and yelling out such hellish notes and screeches, being strangely painted, every one his quiver of arrowes, and at his backe a club, on his arme a fox or an otters skinne, or some such matter for his vambrace<sup>3</sup>; their heads and shoulders painted red, with oyle and Pocones<sup>4</sup> mingled together, which scarlet-like colour made an exceeding handsome shew, his bow in his hand, and the skinne of a bird with her wings abroad dried, tyed on his head, a peece of copper, a white shell, a long feather, with a small rattle growing at the tayles of their snakes tyed to it, or some such like toy All this while Smith and the King stood in the midst guarded, as before is said; and after three dances they all departed. Smith they conducted to a long

<sup>1</sup> fitted to the string, ready for discharge <sup>2</sup> a military formation <sup>3</sup> leather guard for the forearm, protecting against the snap of the bow string <sup>4</sup> puccoon, bloodroot

house, where thirtie or fortie tall fellows did guard him; and ere long more bread and venison was brought him then would have served twentie men. I thinke his stomacke at that time was not very good; what he left they put in baskets and tyed over his head. About midnight they set the meate againe before him, all this time not one of them would eate a bit with him, till the next morning they brought him as much more; and then did they eate all the old, and reserved the new as they had done the other, which made him thinke they would fat him to eat him. Yet in this desperate estate to defend him from the cold, one Maocassater brought him his gowne, in requitall of some beada and toys Smith had given him at his first arrivall in Virginia

Two dayes after, a man would have slaine him (but that the guard prevented it) for the death of his sonne, to whom they conducted him to recover the poore man then breathing his last. Smith told them that at James towne he had a water would doe it, if they would let him fetch it, but they would not permit that, but made all the preparations they could to assault James towne, craving his advice, and for recompence he should have life, libertie, land, and women. In part of a table booke he writ his minde to them at the Fort, what was intended, how they should follow that direction to affright the messengers, and without fayle send him such things as he writ for, and an inventory with them. The difficultie and danger he told the salvages, of the mines, great gunnes, and other engins, exceedingly affrighted them; yet according to his request they went to James towne, in as bitter weather as could be of frost and snow, and within three dayes returned with an answer

But when they came to Jamea towne, seeing men sally out as he had told them they would, they fled; yet in the night they came againe to the same place where he had told them they should receive an answer, and such things as he had promised them; which they found accordingly, and with which they returned with no small expedition, to the wonder of them all that heard it, that he could either divine, or the paper could speake.

Then they led him to the Youthitanunds, the Mattapamients, the Payankatanks, the Nan-

taughtacunds, and Onawmaments upon the rivers of Rapahanock, and Patawomek; over all those rivers, and backe againe by divers other severall nations, to the Kings habitation at Pamaunkee, where they entertained him with most strange and fearefull conjurations,

*As if neare led to hell,  
Amongst the Devils to dwell.*

Not long after, early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other, on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house, and presently came skipping in a great grim fellow, all painted over with coale, mingled with oyle, and many snakes and wesels skins stuffed with mosse, and all their tayles tyed together, so as they met on the crowne of his head in a tassell, and round about the tassell was as a coronet of feathers, the skins hanging round about his head, backe, and shoulders, and in a manner covered his face; with a hellish voyce, and a rattle in his hand. With most strange gestures and passions he began his invocanon, and environed the fire with a circle of meale, which done, three more such like devils came rushing in with the like antique tricks, painted halfe blacke, halfe red, but all their eyes were painted white, and some red stroakes like mutchato's<sup>1</sup> along their cheekes. Round about him those fiends daunced a pretty while, and then came in three more as ugly as the rest, with red eyes, and white stroakes over their blacke faces. At last they all sat downe right against him, three of them on the one hand of the chiefe priest, and three on the other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chiefe priest layd downe five wheat cornes; then straying his armes and hands with such violence that he sweat, and his veynes swelled, he began a short oration, at the conclusion they all gave a short groane, and then layd down three graines more. After that, began their song againe, and then another oration, ever laying downe so many cornes as before, till they had twice incircled the fire; that done, they tooke a bunch of little stickes prepared for that purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at the end of every song and

<sup>1</sup> moustaches

oration, they layd downe a sticke betwixt the divisions of corne. Till night, neither he nor they did either eate or drinke; and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could make. Three dayes they used this ceremony, the meaning whereof, they told him, was to know if he intended them well or no. The circle of meale signified their country, the circles of corne the bounds of the sea, and the stickes his country. They imagined the world to be flat and round, like a trencher, and they in the middist

After this they brought him a bagge of gunpowder, which they carefully preserved till the next spring, to plant as they did their corne, because they would be acquainted with the nature of that seede

Opitchapam, the Kings brother, invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts as did environ him, he bid him wellcome, but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put up all the remainder in baskets.

At his return to Opechancanoughs, all the Kings women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts, as a due by custome, to be merry with such fragments.

*But his waking mnd in hydeous dreames did oft  
see wondrous shapes,  
Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of  
stupendious makes.*

At last they brought him to Meronocomoco, where was Powhatan, their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster, till Powhatan and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of rarowcun<sup>1</sup> skinner, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 years, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red: many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of birds, but every one with something, and a great chayne of white beads about their necks.

At his entrance before the King, all the

<sup>1</sup> raccoon

people gave a great shout. The Queene of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a towell, to dry them. Having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held; but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan. Then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas, the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper, for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pois, plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest

*They say he bore a pleasant shew,  
But sure his heart was sad.  
For who can pleasant be, and rest,  
That lives in feare and dread  
And having life suspected, doth  
It still suspected lead*

Two days after, Powhatan, having disguised himselfe in the most fearefullest manner he could, caused Captain Smith to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after, from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then Powhatan, more like a devill then a man, with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to James towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a grynstone, for which he would give him the Country of Capahowostick, and for ever esteeme him as his sonne Nantaquoud.

So to James towne with 12 guides Powhatan sent him. That night they quartered in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long tyme of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other, for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of

those sterne barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the Fort, where Smith, having used the salvages with what kindnesse he could, he shewed Rawhunt, Powhatans trusty servant, two demi-culverings<sup>1</sup> and a millstone to carry Powhatan: they found them somewhat too heaive, but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyces, and sent to Powhatan, his women, and children such presents, as gave them in generall full content

Now in James Towne they were all in com-

<sup>1</sup> short nine-pound cannon

bustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the pinnace<sup>1</sup>; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon<sup>2</sup> and musket shot, Smith forced now the third time to stay or sinke

Some, no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Leviticall law,<sup>3</sup> for the lives of Robinson and Emry, pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for England

1623

1624

<sup>1</sup> a light sailing vessel    <sup>2</sup> saker (*jako sacra*), an early type of light cannon    <sup>3</sup> Leviticus xxiv 17 "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death"

## 1590 ~ William Bradford ~ 1657?

LIKE Smith, Governor Bradford was not primarily a writer but a man of practical affairs who, at the age of thirty-one, found himself at the head of the only settled colony of Englishmen in America north of the Potomac. Of well-to-do yeoman stock, he had been a leader of the Separatist congregation at Scrooby, in Yorkshire, in its hazardous removal to Holland in 1608, and twelve years later in the migration to New England. When John Carver, the only member of the lesser gentry among the Pilgrims, died in April, 1621, Bradford succeeded him as governor, so ably that he was annually re-elected thereafter as long as he lived, except for five scattered years. Until 1637 he was also judge and treasurer of the colony. He managed well the troublesome responsibilities of maintaining relations with the Indians, with embarrassed financial backers and antagonistic religious critics in England, and with occasional interlopers like Thomas Morton of Merry Mount. His government was strict in its religious observances, but more tolerant of dissenters than that of Massachusetts Bay or of Connecticut.

Shortly after landing, Bradford began a methodical journal of happenings in the new settlement, a portion of which was used in Bradford and Edward Winslow's *Relation of the English Plantation Settled at Plymouth*, published in London in 1662 and often called from the printer, *Mourt's Relation*. He continued his journal, which, with his letter books, formed the basis of his history, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, carrying the affairs of the Colony to 1646 and left in manuscript at his death in 1657.



Whereas Smith's manner of writing was that of the travel narratives of the day, with an occasional echo of *Euphues*, Bradford used a "plaine style" whose occasional passages of eloquence derived their power from the Geneva Bible. This style is characterized by moral earnestness, business exactness, a conviction of divine agency, and rare touches of ironic humor, as in his advice to hesitant immigrants not to come until they are "muskeeto-proof."

*Mourt's Relation* (1622) has been edited by Edward Arber in *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers* (1897). *Of Plymouth Plantation* was not printed until 1856. The manuscript, after being used by Nathaniel Morton, Thomas Prince, Thomas Hutchinson, and other New England historians, was apparently removed by some British officer or refugee during the Revolution, and was lost to sight until found in 1855 in the library of the Bishop of London. Over forty years later, in 1897, it was returned to America, where it is now kept in the State House at Boston. It was reprinted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1898. The best edition is that of W. C. Ford for the Massachusetts Historical Society (two volumes, 1912), with full annotations. A facsimile reproduction by J. H. Doyle was published in London in 1896. A modernized version was produced by H. Paget in 1909. Letters of Bradford are printed in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 1st series, III, 27-84, and 4th series, VI, 156-161, and in *American Historical Review*, VIII, 294-301.

There is no extended biography of Governor Bradford. The best brief account is that by S. E. Morison (with bibliography) in *DAB*. A good appreciation of Bradford's style may be found in K. B. Murdock's chapter, "Colonial Historians," in John Macy's *American Writers on American Literature* (1931), 7-9. E. F. Bradford, in *New England Quarterly*, I, 133-157, presents an analysis of "Conscious Art in Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*." For some evidence of Bradford's reading, consult T. G. Wright, *Literary Culture in Early New England* (1920), 58-59, and for a partial inventory of his library, G. E. Bowman in the *Mayflower Descendant*, II, 232-233. For a good sketch of the settlement at Plymouth and Bradford's part in it, see Roland G. Usher's *The Pilgrims and Their History* (1918).

## From OF PLYMOUTH PLANTATION

### [Arrival in New England]

ANNO 1620

BRING thus arived in a good harbor<sup>1</sup> and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed y<sup>e</sup> 2 God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast & furious ocean, and delivered them from all the periles &

<sup>1</sup> at Provincetown, on Cape Cod, where the first landing was made. <sup>2</sup> The first letter in this generally misread contraction is a symbol for the Anglo-Saxon letter representing the *th* sound. Accordingly *y<sup>e</sup>* and *y<sup>t</sup>* are in reading always to be pronounced *the* and *that*. From this point, the text abandons Bradford's abbreviation *y<sup>e</sup>*. Otherwise, his spellings have been followed.

miseries therof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyefull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his owne Italy, as he affirmed,<sup>1</sup> that he had rather remaine twentie years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious & dreadfull was the same unto him.

But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition, and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembered by *y<sup>t</sup>* which wente before), they

<sup>1</sup> Epist. 53 [Bradford's note]

had now no freinds to wellcome them, nor  
 inns to entertaine or refresh their weather-  
 beaten bodys, no houses or much less townes  
 to repaire too, to seeke for succoure. It is  
 recorded in scripture <sup>1</sup> as a mercie to the apos-  
 tle & his shipwaked company, y<sup>t</sup> the bar-  
 barians shewed them no smale kindnes in  
 refreshing them, but these savage barbarians,  
 when they mette with them (as after will ap-  
 peare) were readier to fill their sides full of  
 arrows then otherwise And for the season it  
 was winter, and they that know the winters  
 of y<sup>t</sup> cuntrie know them to be sharp & violent,  
 & subjecte to cruell & ferce stormes, dean-  
 gerous to travell to known places, much more  
 to serch an unknown coast. Besides, what could  
 they see but a ludious & desolate wildernes,  
 full of wild beasts & wild men<sup>2</sup> and what  
 multatuds ther might be of them they knew  
 not Nether could they, as it were, goe up  
 to the tope of Pisgah, to vew from this will-  
 dernes a more goodly cuntrie to feed their  
 hop[e]s, for which waysoever they turnd their  
 eys (save upward to the heavens) they could  
 have little solace or content in respecte of any  
 outward objects For sumer being done, all  
 things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten  
 face; and the whole cuntrie, full of woods &  
 thuckets, represented a wild & savage heiw  
 If they looked behund them, ther was the mighty  
 ocean which they had passed, and was now  
 as a maine barr and goulfe to separate them  
 from all the civill parts of the world. If it be  
 said they had a ship to sucour them, it is  
 trew, but what heard they daly from the m<sup>r</sup>  
 & comp<sup>ny</sup><sup>3</sup> but y<sup>t</sup> with speede they should  
 looke out a place with their shallop, wher  
 they would be at some near distance; for the  
 season was shuch as he would not sturr from  
 thence till a safe harbor was discovered by  
 them wher they would be, and he might goe  
 without danger; and that vicitells consumed  
 apace, but he must & would keepe sufficient  
 for them selves & their returne Yea, it was  
 muttered by some, that if they gott not a place  
 in time, they would turne them & their goods  
 ashore & leave them Let it also be considred  
 what weake hopes of supply & succoure they  
 left behunde them, y<sup>t</sup> might bear up their minds  
 in this sade conditoun and trialls they were

under; and they could not but be very smale  
 It is true, indeed, the affectiones & love of their  
 brethren at Leyden was cordiall & entire to-  
 wards them, but they had little power to help  
 them, or them selves; and how the case stode  
 betweene them & the marchants at their com-  
 ing away, hath allready been declared. What  
 could now sustaine them but the spirite of  
 God & his grace<sup>4</sup> May not & ought not the  
 children of these fathers rightly say. *Our fa-  
 thers were Englishmen which came over this great  
 ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilder-  
 ness<sup>1</sup>, but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard  
 their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, &c  
 Let them therfore praise the Lord, because he is  
 good, & his mercies endure for ever<sup>2</sup> Yea, let  
 them which have been redeemed of the Lord,  
 shew how he hath delivered them from the hand  
 of the oppressour When they wandered in the  
 deserte wildernes out of the way, and found no  
 citie to dwell in, both hungrie, & thirstie, their  
 soule was overwhelmed in them. Let them con-  
 fess before the Lord his loving kindnes, and his  
 wonderfull works before the sons of men*

### [The Mayflower Compact]

ANNO 1620

I shall a litle returne backe and begine with  
 a combination made by them before they came  
 ashore, being the first foundation of their  
 govermente in this place, occasioned partly  
 by the discontented & mutinous speeches that  
 some of the strangers amongst them had let  
 fall from them in the ship—That when they  
 came a shore they would use their owne liber-  
 tie; for none had power to comand them, the  
 patente they had being for Virginia, and not  
 for New-england, which belonged to an other  
 Government, with which the Virginia Com-  
 pany had nothing to doe. And partly that  
 shuch an acte by them done (this ther condi-  
 tion considered) might be as firme as any  
 patent, and in some respects more sure.

The forme was as followeth

In the name of God, Amen We whose  
 names are underwriten, the loyall subjects of  
 our dread soveraigne Lord, King James, by

<sup>1</sup> Act 28 [Bradford's note]

<sup>1</sup> Deu 26 5, 7 [Bradford's note] <sup>2</sup> 107 Psa v. 1,  
 2, 4, 5, 8 [Bradford's note]

the grace of God, of Great Britaine, France, & Ireland king, defender of the faith, &c., having undertaken, for the glorie of God, and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering & preservation & furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by vertue hereof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just & equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete & convenient for the generall good of the Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11. of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James, of England, France, & Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fiftie fourth. Ano<sup>m</sup> Dom. 1620

After this they chose, or rather confirmed, Mr. John Carver (a man godly & well approved amongst them) their Governour for that year. And after they had provided a place for their goods, or comone store, (which were long in unlading for want of boats, foulness of winter weather, and sicknes of diverse persons,) and begune some small cottages for their habitation, as time would admitte, they mette and consulted of lawes & orders, both for their civill & military Governemts, as the necessitie of their condition did require, still adding therunto as urgent occasion in severall times, and as cases did require

In these hard & difficulte beginnings they found some discontents & murmurings arise amongst some, and mutinous speeches & carriages in other; but they were soone quelled & overcome by the wisdom, patience, and just & equall carriage of things by the Gov<sup>r</sup> and better part, w<sup>th</sup> clave faithfully together in the maine. But that which was most sadd & lamentable was, that in 2 or 3 moneths time halfe of their company dyed, espetially in Jan & February, being the depth of winter, and wanting houses & other comforts, being infected with the scurvie & other diseases, which this long viage & their inacomodate condition had brought upon them; so as ther dyed

some times 2 or 3 of a day, in the foresaid time; that of 100 & odd persons, scarce 50 remained. And of these in the time of most distres, ther was but 6 or 7 sound persons, who, to their great comendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them woode, made them fires, drest them meat, made their beads, washed their lothsome cloaths, cloathed & uncloathed them, in a word, did all the homly & necessarie offices for them w<sup>th</sup> dainty & queisie stomachs cannot endure to hear named, and all this willingly & cherfully, without any grudging in the least, shewing herein their true love unto their freinds & bretheren. A rare example & worthy to be remembred Tow of these 7 were Mr William Brewster, ther reverend Elder, & Myles Standish, ther Captein & military comander, unto whom my selfe, & many others, were much beholden in our low & sicke condition And yet the Lord so upheld these persons, as in this generall calamity they were not at all infected either with sickness, or lamnes And what I have said of these, I may say of many others who dyed in this generall vissitation, & others yet living, that whilst they had health, yea, or any strength continuing, they were not wanting to any that had need of them And I doute not but their recompence is with the Lord

But I may not hear pass by an other remarkable passage not to be forgotten. As this calamitie fell among the passengers that were to be left here to plant, and were hasted a shore and made to drinke water, that the sea-men might have the more bear, and one<sup>1</sup> in his sicknes desiring but a small cann of beere, it was answered, that if he were their owne father he should have none, the disease begane to fall amongst them also, so as almost halfe of their company dyed before they went away, and many of their officers and lustiest men, as the boatson, gunner, 3 quartermasters, the cooke, & others. At w<sup>th</sup> the m<sup>r</sup>. was something stricken and sent to the sick a shore and tould the Gov<sup>r</sup> he should send for beer for them that had need of it, though he drunke water homward bound. But now amongst his company ther was farr another kind of carriage

<sup>1</sup> Which was this author him selfe [Bradford's note]

in this miserie then amongst the passengers; for they that before had been boone companions in drinking & joyllity in the time of their health & wellfare, begane now to deserte one another in this calamitie, saing they would not hasard ther lives for them, they should be infected by coming to help them in their cabins, and so, after they came to dye by it, would doe litle or nothing for them, but if they dyed let them dye. But shuch of the passengers as were yet aboard shewed them what mercy they could, w<sup>ch</sup> made some of their harts relente, as the boatson (& some others), who was a prowde yonge man, and would often curse & scofe at the passengers; but when he grew weak, they had compassion on him and helped him, then he confessed he did not deserve it at their hands, he had abused them in word & deed. "O!" saith he, "you, I now see, shew your love like Christians indeed one to another, but we let one another lye & dye like dogges." Another lay cursing his wife, saing if it had not ben for her he had never come thus unlucky viage, and anone cursing his fellows, saing he had done this & that, for some of them, he had spent so much, & so much, amongst them, and they were now weary of him, and did not help him, having need. Another gave his companion all he had, if he died, to help him in his weakness; he went and got a little spise & made him a mess of meat once or twice, and because he dyed not so soone as he expected, he went amongst his fellows, & swore the rogue would cousen him, he would see him choaked before he made him any more meate, and yet the pore fellow dyed before morning.

All this while the Indians came skulking about them, and would sometimes show themselves aloofe of, but when any approached near them, they would rune away. And once they stoale away their tools wher they had been at worke, & were gone to dner. But about the 16 of *March* a certaine Indian came bouldly amongst them, and spoke to them in broken English, which they could well understand, but marvelled at it. At length they understood by discourse with him, that he was not of these parts, but belonged to the eastrene parts, wher some English-shups came to fish, with whom he was aquainted, & could name

sundrie of them by their names, amongst whom he had gott his language. He became profitable to them in aquainting them with many things concerning the state of the cuntry in the east-parts wher he lived, which was afterwards profitable unto them; as also of the people hear, of their names, number, & strength; of their situation & distance from this place, and who was cheefe amongst them. His name was Samaset; he tould them also of another Indian whos name was Squanto, a native of this place, who had been in England & could speake better English then him selfe. Being, after some time of entertainmente & gifts, dismissed, a while after he came againe, & 5 more with him, & they brought againe all the tooles that were stolen away before, and made way for the coming of their great Sachem, called Massasoyt; who, about 4 or 5 days after, came with the cheefe of his freinds & other attendance, with the aforesaid Squanto. With whom, after frendly entertainment, & some gifts given him, they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24 years) in these terms.

1. That neither he nor any of his, should injurie or doe hurte to any of their people.

2. That if any of his did any hurte to any of theirs, he should send the offender, that they might punish him.

3. That if any thing were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored, and they should doe the like to his.

4. If any did unjustly warr against him, they would aide him, if any did warr against them, he should aide them.

5. He should send to his neighbours confederats, to certifie them of this, that they might not wrong them, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.

6. That when ther men came to them, they should leave their bows & arrows behind them.

After these things he returned to his place caled Sowams, some 40 mile from this place, but Squanto continued with them, and was their interpreter, and was a spetiall instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation. He directed them how to set their come, wher to take fish, and to procure other commodities, and was also their pilot to bring them to unknowne places for their profit, and

never left them till he dyed. He was a native of this place, & scarce any left alive beside him selfe.

[*Christmas Observance in 1621*]

... And herewith I shall end this year Only I shall remember one passage more, rather of mirth then of waight. One the day called Christmasday, the Gov<sup>r</sup> caled them out to worke, (as was used) but the most of this new-company excused them selves and said it wente against their consciences to work on y<sup>t</sup> day So the Gov<sup>r</sup> tould them that if they made it mater of conscience, he would spare them till they were better informed So he led-away them in the streete at play, openly, some pitching the barr, & some at stoole-ball, and shuch like sports. So he went to them, and tooke away their implements, and tould them that was against his conscience, that they should play & others worke If they made the keeping of it mater of devotion, let them kepe their houses, but ther should be no gameing or revelling in the streets Since which time nothing hath been attempted that way, at least openly

[*A Communistic Experiment Abandoned*]

ANNO 1623

All this while no supply was heard of, neither knew they when they might expecte any So they begane to thinke how they might raise as much corne as they could, and obtaine a beter crope then they had done, that they might not still thus languish in miserie At length, after much debate of things, the Gov<sup>r</sup> (with the advise of the cheefest amongst them) gave way that they should set corne every man for his owne perticuler, and in that regard trust to them selves, in all other things to goe on in the generall way as before. And so assigned to every family a parcell of land, according to the proportion of their number for that end, only for present use (but made no devisioun for inheritance), and ranged all boys

and youth under some familie. This had very good success; for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corne was planted then other waise would have bene by any means the Gov<sup>r</sup> or any other could use, and saved him a great deall of trouble, and gave farr better contente. The women now wente willingly into the feld, and tooke their lile-  
10 ons with them to set corne, which before would aledge weaknes, and inabilitie, whom to have compelled would have bene thought great tiranie and oppression

The experience that was had in this comone course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceit<sup>1</sup> of Plato's and other ancients, applauded by some of later times, that the taking away of propertie, and bringing in communitie into a comone wealth, would make them happy and flourishing, as if they were wiser then God For this communitie (so farr as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to their benefite and comforte. For the yongmen that were most able and fitte for labour and service did repine that they should spend their time and strength to worke for other men's wives and children, with out any recom-  
30 pence. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in devisioun of victuals and cloaths, then he that was weake and not able to doe a quarter the other could, this was thought injuste. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalised in labours, and victuals, cloaths, etc., with the meaner and yonger sorte, thought it some indiguite and disrespect unto them And for men's wives to be commanded to doe servise for other men, as dressing their meate, washing their cloaths, etc., they deemd it a kind of slaverie, neither could many husbands well brooke it. Upon the poynte all being to have alike, and all to doe alike, they thought them selves in the like condition, and one as good as another, and so, if it did not cut off those relations that God hath set amongst men, yet it did at least much diminish and take off the mutuall respects that should be preserved amongst them And would have  
50 bene worse if they had been men of another

<sup>1</sup> idea, opinion

condition. Let none objecte this is men's corruption, and nothing to the course it selfe. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption

in them, God in his wisdome saw another course fitter for them.

1630-1650

1856

## 1575? -- *Thomas Morton* -- 1646?

THOMAS MORTON is interesting chiefly as an exception to the sober earnestness of the colonial writers, northern and southern alike, during the seventeenth century. Little is known of his early life; dates as divergent as 1575 and 1590 have been given for his birth. According to his own account, he had been a law student before his first visit to America in 1622. Three years later he returned in the company of Captain Wollaston to settle on the shores of Quincy Bay, in Massachusetts. When Wollaston, with most of the company, moved on to Virginia a little later, Morton remained as chief among a small band who conducted themselves with boisterous license, as it seemed to their scattered Puritan neighbors, frolicked freely with the Indian bucks and squaws, and sold or gave them liquor as an inducement for trading. All this might have been grudgingly tolerated but for the menace created by his selling firearms and gunpowder to the savages. At the request of the alarmed settlers, a small posse, headed by Captain Standish, seized Morton and his followers after a show of resistance, and he was deported. Banished again a few years later by the Massachusetts Bay authorities, he did them what harm he could in his satirical *New English Canaan* (Amsterdam, 1637); but his posing as the defender of the English Church and of "old English customs" like the maypole dances, as against the malevolent "Separatists" of New England, availed him little in the turbulent state of affairs in the mother country.

Six years later he was back in New England, drifting about, imprisoned for a year in Massachusetts, and ending his days in the more congenial Anglican settlements in Maine, where he died, at Agamenticus (York) in 1647.

Morton's one work, the *New English Canaan*, is repetitious, disorganized, stuffed with mythological conceits, and uninteresting except when dealing with his controversies with Plymouth and Bay colonists. A corrective for Morton's and Bradford's prejudiced accounts may be found in Hawthorne's imaginative tale "The Maypole of Merry Mount."

The *New English Canaan* was printed in 1637, ostensibly in Amsterdam though perhaps actually in England. It was edited, with corrections and a biographical introduction, for the Prince Society by C. F. Adams, Jr. (1883). For biography see also Adams's *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*, I (1892), the articles in *DAB* and *DNB*, and the charges against Morton submitted to the Council for New England, in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 3rd series, 62-64 (1794).

From NEW ENGLISH  
CANAAN

BOOK III, CHAPTER XIV

*Of the Revells of New Canaan*<sup>1</sup>

THE inhabitants of Pasonagesit, (having translated the name of their habitation from that ancient salvage name to Ma-re Mount, and being resolved to have the new name confirmed for a memorial to after ages,) did devise amongst themselves to have it performed in a solemn manner, with revells and merriment after the old English custome; [they] prepared to sett up a Maypole upon the festuall day<sup>2</sup> of Philip and Jacob, and therefore brewed a barrell of excellent beare and provided a case of bottles, to be spent, with other good cheare, for all commers of that day. And because they would have it in a compleat forme, they had prepared a song fitting to the time and present occasion. And upon May-day they brought the Maypole to the place appointed, with drummes, gunnes, pistols, and other fitting instruments, for that purpose; and there erected it with the help of salvages, that came thether of purpose to see the manner of our revells. A goodly pine tree of 80 foote longe was reared up, with a pearce of buckshorns nayled on somewhat neare unto the top of it, where it stood, as a faire sea marke for directions how to finde out the way to mine Hoste of Ma-re Mount

There was likewise a merry song made, which, (to make their revells more fashionable,) was sung with a corus, every man bearing his part, which they performed in a dance, hand in hand about the Maypole, whiles one of the company sung, and filled out the good liquor, like Ganymedes and Jupiter

THE SONGE

Drinke and be merry, merry, merry boyes;  
Let all your delight be in the Hymens joyes;  
Io to Hymen, now the day is come,  
About the merry Maypole take a roome

Make greene garlons, bring bottles out  
And fill sweet nectar freely about.  
Uncover thy head and feare no harme,  
For her's good liquor to keepe it warme.

<sup>1</sup> Morton's spelling has been preserved in this section    <sup>2</sup> May 1

Then drinke and be merry, &c.  
Io to Hymen, &c

Nectar is a thing assign'd  
By the Deities owne minde  
To cure the hart oppress with greife,  
And of good liquors is the cheife,  
Then drinke, &c.  
Io to Hymen, &c.

Give to the mellancolly man  
A cup or two of't now and than,  
This physick will soone revive his bloud,  
And make him be of a merrier moode.  
Then drinke, &c.  
Io to Hymen, &c

10 Give to the Nymphe that's free from scorne  
No Irish stuff nor Scotch over worne  
Lasses in beaver coats, come away,  
Yee shall be welcome to us night and day  
To drinke and be merry, &c  
Io to Hymen, &c

This harmeles mirth made by younge men, (that lived in hope to have wives bought over to them, that would save them a labour to make a voyage to fetch any over) was much distasted of the precise Separatists, that keepe much a doe about the tyth of Mutt and Cummin,<sup>1</sup> troubling their braines more then reason would require about things that are indifferent: and from that time sought occasion against my honest Host of Ma-re Mount, to overthrow his undertakings and to destroy his plantation quite and cleane . .

CHAPTER XV

[Morton's Arrest]

The Separatists, envying the prosperity and hope of the Plantation at Ma-re Mount, (which they perceaved beganne to come forward, and to be in a good way for game in the Beaver trade,) conspired together against mine Host especially, (who was the owner of that Plantation,) and made up a party against him, and mustred up what aide they could, 40 accounting of him as of a great Monster

Many threatening speeches were given out both against his person and his Habitation,

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 23 23 " ye pay tithe mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith "

which they divulged should be consumed with fire: And taking advantage of the time when his company, (which seemed little to regard their threats,) were gone up into the Inlands to trade with the Salvages for Beaver, they set upon my honest host at a place called Wessaguscus,<sup>1</sup> where, by accident, they found him. The inhabitants there were in good hope of the subversion of the plantation at Mare Mount, (which they principally ayimed at,) and the rather because mine host was a man that indeavoured to advance the dignity of the Church of England, which they, (on the contrary part,) would labour to vilifie with uncivile termes<sup>2</sup> envyeing<sup>2</sup> against the sacred booke of common prayer, and mine host that used it in a laudable manner amongst his family, as a practise of piety.

There hee would be a meanes to bring sacks to their mill, (such is the thirst after Beaver,) and helped the conspiratores to surprise mine host, (who was there all alone,) and they charged him, (because they would seeme to have some reasonable cause against him to sett a glosse upon their mallice,) with criminall things, which indeede had beene done by such a person, but was of their conspiracy, mine host demaunded of the conspirators who it was that was author of that information, that seemed to be their ground for what they now intended. And because they answered they would not tell him, hee as peremptorily replied, that hee would not say whether he had, or he had not done as they had bin informed.

The answer made no matter, (as it seemed,) whether it had bin negatively or affirmatively made, for they had resolved that hee should suffer, because, (as they boasted,) they were now become the greater number: they had shaken of their shackles of servitude, and were become Masters, and masterles people.

It appears they were like beares whelpes in former time, when mine hosts plantation was of as much strength as theirs, but now, (theirs being stronger,) they, (like overgrowne beares,) seemed monstrous. In breife, mine host must indure to be their prisoner untill they could contrive it so that they might send him for England, (as they said,) there to suffer according to the merit of the fact which

they intended to father upon him; supposing, (belike,) it would proove a hainous crime.

Much rejoycing was made that they had gotten their capitall enemy, (as they concluded him,) whome they purposed to hamper in such sort that hee should not be able to uphold his plantation at Ma-re Mount.

The Conspirators sported themselves at my honest host, that meant them no hurt, and were so joccund that they feasted their bodies, and fell to uppling as if they had obtained a great prize; like the Trojans when they had the custody of Hippeus pinetree horse.<sup>1</sup>

Mine host fained greefe, and could not be perswaded either to eate or drinke, because hee knew emptines would be a meanes to make him as watchfull as the Geese kept in the Roman Cappitall whereon, the contrary part, the conspirators would be so drowsy that hee might have an opportunity to give them a slip, insteade of a tester. Six persons of the conspiracy were set to watch him at Wessaguscus. But hee kept waking; and in the dead of night, (one lying on the bed for further surtyy,) up gets mine Host and got to the second dore that hee was to passe, which, notwithstanding the lock, hee got open, and shut it after him with such violence that it affrighted some of the conspirators.

The word, which was given with an alarme, was, *o he's gon, he's gon, what shall wee doe, he's gon!* The rest, (halfe a sleepe,) start up in a maze, and, like rames, ran their heads one at another full butt in the darke.

Theire grande leader, Captaine Shrimp,<sup>2</sup> tooke on most furiously and tore his clothes for anger, to see the empty nest, and their bird gone.

The rest were eager to have torne their haire from their heads; but it was so short that it would give them no hold. Now Captaine Shrimp thought in the losse of this prize, (which hee accounted his Master peece,) all his honour would be lost for ever.

In the meane time mine Host was got home to Ma-re Mount through the woods, eight miles round about the head of the river Monat-oquit that parted the two Plantations, finding

<sup>1</sup> The hollow wooden horse in which the concealed Grecian warriors were smuggled within the walls of Troy    <sup>2</sup> Myles Standish

<sup>1</sup> Weymouth    <sup>2</sup> inveighing



his way by the helpe of the lightening, (for it thundred as hee went terribly;) and there hee prepared powther, three pounds dried, for his present employment, and foure good gunnes for him and the two assistants left at his howse, with bullets of severall sizes, three houndred or thereabouts, to be used if the conspirators should pursue him thether and these two persons promised there aides in the quarrell, and confirmed that promise with health in good rosa solis.

Now Captaine Shrimp, the first Captaine in the Land, (as hee supposed,) must doe some new act to repaire this losse, and, to vindicate his reputation, who had sustained blemish by this oversight, begins now to study, how to repaire or survive his honor in this manner, callenge of Councell, they conclude

Hee takes eight persons more to him, and, (like the nine Worthies of New Canaan,) they imbarque with preparation against Ma-re Mount where this Monster of a man, as there phrase was, had his denne, the whole number, had the rest not bin from home, being but seven, would have given Captaine Shrimpe, (a quondam Drummer,) such a wellcome as would have made him wish for a Drume as bigg as Diogenes tubb, that hee might have crept into it out of sight.

Now the nine Worthies are approached, and mine Host prepared, having intelligence by a Salvage, that hastened in love from Wes-saguscus to give him notice of their intent

One of mine Hosts men prooved a craven the other had prooved his wits to purchase a litle valoure, before mine Host had observed his posture.<sup>1</sup>

The nine worthies comming before the Denne of this supposed Monster, (this seven headed hydra, as they termed him,) and began, like Don Quixote against the Windmill, to beate a parly, and to offer quarter, if mine Host would yeald; for they resolved to send him for England; and bad him lay by his armes

But hee, (who was the Sonne of a Souldier,) having taken up armes in his just defence, replied that hee would not lay by those armes,

because they were so needefull at Sea, if hee should be sent over. Yet, to save the effusion of so much warty bloud, as would have issued out of the waynes of these 9. worthies of New Canaan, if mine Host should have played upon them out at his port holes, (for they came within danger like a flocke of wild geese, as if they had bin tayed one to another, as coultis to be sold at a faier,) mine Host was content to yeelde upon quarter, and did capitulate with them in what manner it should be for more certainty, because hee knew what Captaine Shrimpe was.

Hee expressed that no violence should be offered to his person, none to his goods, nor any of his Howsehold but that hee should have his armes, and what els was requisit for the voyage which there Herald retornes, it was agreed upon, and should be performed

But mine Host no sooner had set open the dore, and issued out, but instantly Captaine Shrimpe and the rest of the worthies stepped to him, layd hold of his armes, and had him downe and so eagerly was every man bent against him, (not regarding any agreement made with such a carnall man,) that they fell upon him as if they would have eaten him some of them were so violent that they would have a slice with scabbert, and all for haste untill an old Souldier, (of the Queenes, as the Proverbe is,) that was there by accident, clapt his gunne under the weapons, and sharply rebuked these worthies for their unworthy practises. So the matter was taken into more deliberate consideration

Captaine Shrimp, and the rest of the nine worthies, made themselves, (by this outrageous riot,) Masters of mine Host of Ma-re Mount, and disposed of what hee had at his plantation.

This they knew, (in the eye of the Salvages,) would add to their glory, and diminish the reputation of mine honest Host, whome they practised to be rdd of upon any termes, as willingly as if hee had bin the very Hydra<sup>1</sup> of the time.

1635<sup>2</sup>

1637

<sup>1</sup> Hydra, the nine-headed monster killed by Hercules

<sup>2</sup> [intoxicated] condition

1588 ~ *John Winthrop* ~ 1649

IN CONTRAST with Bradford, Governor Winthrop represents the higher social and educational standing and the greater affluence of the Massachusetts and Connecticut settlers. Born in Suffolk, England, of cultured and wealthy parentage, he spent two years at Cambridge and then took up the study of law. By 1629 his public distinction and religious earnestness had so impressed the leaders of the Puritan group desiring "to practise the positive part of church reformation and propagate the gospel in America" (Francis Higginson, Sermon on leaving England) that they elected him in advance as governor of the new colony. He came the next year with the first shiploads of Bay colonists and served as governor and deputy governor, except for seven years, until his death in 1649. Unlike the Plymouth Separatists, he was a believer in church unity, centralized government, and control by the competent few, ideas which greatly influenced the character of Massachusetts, and also, through his son, Governor John Winthrop, that of Connecticut. His most important work was his journal, kept, with occasional blanks, from 1630 to 1649 and generally miscalled *The History of New England*. In this and in his letters, he exhibits, along with the qualities of an English gentleman, a sincere and vital piety that ran through all the acts and relationships of his life. His legal mind—with Nathaniel Ward he was almost the only lawyer in the New England settlements—shows itself perhaps in the ingenuity with which he regularly derived moral or spiritual significance from occurrences of trivial or extraordinary proportions. To a greater extent than Bradford's, his journal consists of brief memoranda like "Friday, 2. My son, Henry Winthrop, was drowned at Salem." That this brief, tight-lipped mention does not indicate a lack of emotional feeling, as is often charged against the seventeenth-century Puritans, is proved by the human as well as spiritual tenderness in the letters exchanged between him and his third wife, Margaret (Tyndall) Winthrop.

The best recent edition of Winthrop's *Journal* is by J. K. Hosmer (1908). Winthrop's letters are included in the Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections*, 4th series, VI and VII, 5th series, I. The Massachusetts Historical Society is publishing a complete edition of Winthrop's works, 1929—There are biographies by R. C. Winthrop (1863) and J. H. Twichell (1891). See also A. M. Earle, *Margaret Winthrop* (1895); S. Gray, "The Political Thought of John Winthrop," *New England Quarterly*, III, 681-705 (October, 1930), E. A. J. Johnson, "Economic Ideas of John Winthrop," *ibid.*, III, 235-250 (April, 1930), S. E. Morison, *Builders of the Bay Colony* (1930), 51-104, V. L. Parrington, *The Colonial Mind* (1927), 38-50; J. H. Twichell, *Some Old Puritan Love-Letters—John and Margaret Winthrop* (1893), and M. C. Tyler, *History of American Literature*, 1607-1678, I, 129-136.

## LETTERS TO HIS WIFE

## I

MY FAITHFUL AND DEAR WIFE,<sup>1</sup>

It pleaseth God, that thou shouldst once again hear from me before our departure, and I hope this shall come safe to thy hands. I know it will be a great refreshing to thee. And blessed be his mercy, that I can write thee so good news, that we are all in very good health, and, having tried our ship's entertainment now more than a week, we find it agree very well with us. Our boys are well and cheerful, and have no mind of home. They lie both with me, and sleep as soundly in a rug (for we use no sheets here) as ever they did at Groton, and so I do myself, (I praise God). The wind hath been against us this week and more, but this day it has come fair to the north, so as we are preparing (by God's assistance) to set sail in the morning. We have only four ships ready, and some two or three Hollanders go along with us. The rest of our fleet (being seven ships) will not be ready this sennight. We have spent now two Sabbaths on shipboard very comfortably (God be praised) and are daily more and more encouraged to look for the Lord's presence to go along with us. Henry Kingsbury hath a child or two in the *Talbot* sick of the measles, but like to do well. One of my men had them at Hampton, but he was soon well again. We are, in all our eleven ships, about seven hundred persons, passengers, and two hundred and forty cows, and about sixty horses. The ship which went from Plymouth carried about one hundred and forty persons, and the ship which goes from Bristol carrieth about eighty persons. And now (my sweet soul) I must once again take my last farewell of thee in Old England. It goeth very near to my heart to leave thee, but I know to whom I have committed thee, even to him who loves thee much better than any husband can, who hath taken account of the hairs of thy head, and puts all thy tears in his bottle, who can, and (if it be for his glory) will bring us together again with peace and comfort. Oh,

<sup>1</sup> From this point, the spelling in the selections has been modernized, to avoid occasional confusion to the reader.

how it refresheth my heart, to think, that I shall yet again see thy sweet face in the land of the living!—that lovely countenance, that I have so much delighted in, and beheld with so great content! I have hitherto been so taken up with business, as I could seldom look back to my former happiness; but now, when I shall be at some leisure, I shall not avoid the remembrance of thee, nor the grief for thy absence. Thou hast thy share with me, but I hope the course we have agreed upon will be some ease to us both. Mondays and Fridays, at five of the clock at night, we shall meet in spirit till we meet in person. Yet, if all these hopes should fail, blessed be our God, that we are assured we shall meet one day, if not as husband and wife, yet in a better condition. Let that stay and comfort thy heart. Neither can the sea drown thy husband, nor enemies destroy, nor any adversary deprive thee of thy husband or children. Therefore I will only take thee now and my sweet children in mine arms, and kiss and embrace you all, and so leave you with my God. Farewell, farewell. I bless you all in the name of the Lord Jesus. I salute my daughter Winth, Matt., Nan, and the rest, and all my good neighbors and friends. Pray all for us. Farewell. Commend my blessing to my son John. I cannot now write to him, but tell him I have committed thee and thine to him. Labor to draw him yet nearer to God, and he will be the surer staff of comfort to thee. I cannot name the rest of my good friends, but thou canst supply it. I wrote, a week since, to thee and Mr. Leigh, and divers others.

Thine wheresoever,  
JO. WINTHROP

From aboard the *Arbella*, riding at the Cowes, March 28, 1630.

[P. S.] I would have written to my brother and sister Gostling, but it is near midnight. Let this excuse, and commend my love to them and all theirs.

## II

MY DEAR WIFE,

I wrote to thee by my brother Arthur, but I durst write no more than I need not care though it miscarried, for I found him the old

man still, yet I would have kept him to ease my brother, but that his own desire to return, and the scarcity of provisions here, yielded the stronger reason to let him go. Now (my good wife) let us join in praising our merciful God, that (howsoever he hath afflicted us, both generally and particularly mine own family in his stroke upon my son Henry <sup>1</sup>) yet myself and the rest of our children and family are safe and in health, and that he upholds our hearts that we faint not in all our troubles, but can yet wait for a good issue. And howsoever our fare be but coarse in respect of what we formerly had, (pease, puddings and fish being our ordinary diet) yet he makes it sweet and wholesome to us, that I may truly say I desire no better. Besides in this, that he begins with us thus in affliction, it is the greater argument to us of his love, and of the goodness of the work which we are about, for Satan bends his forces against us, and stirs up his instruments to all kinds of mischief, so that I think here are some persons who never showed so much wickedness in England as they have done here. Therefore be not discouraged (my dear wife) by anything thou shalt hear from hence, I see no cause to repent of our coming hither, and thou seest (by our experience) that God can bring safe hither even the tenderest women and the youngest children (as he did many in diverse ships, though the voyage were more tedious than formerly hath been known in this season). Be sure to be warm clothed, and to have store of fresh provisions, meal, eggs put up in salt or ground malt, butter, oat meal, pease, and fruits, and a large strong chest or 2, well locked, to keep these provisions in, and be sure they be bestowed in the ship where they may be readily come by, (which the boatswain will see to and the quarter masters, if they be rewarded beforehand) but for these things my son will take care. Be sure to have ready at sea 2 or 3 skillets of several sizes, a large frying pan, a small stewing pan, and a case to boil a pudding in; store of linen for use at sea, and sack to bestow among the sailors: some drinking vessels, and pewter and other vessels and for physic you shall need no other but a pound of Doctor Wright's *Electuarium lenitivum*, and

<sup>1</sup> drowned at Salem, July 2, 1630

his direction to use it, a gallon of scurvy grass to drink a little 5 or 6 mornings together, with some saltpeter dissolved in it, and a little grated or sliced nutmeg.

Thou must be sure to bring no more company than so many as shall have full provision for a year and half, for though the earth here be very fertile, yet there must be time and means to raise it, if we have corn enough we may live plentifully. Yet all these are but the means which God hath ordained to do us good by: our eyes must be towards him who as he can withhold blessings from the strongest means, so he can give sufficient virtue to the weakest. I am so straitened with much business, as can no way satisfy myself in writing to thee. The Lord will in due time let us see the faces of each other again to our great comfort. Now the Lord in mercy bless, guide, and support thee. I kiss and embrace thee, my dear wife. I kiss and bless you all, my dear children. Forth, Mary, Deane, Sam, and the other. The Lord keep you all and work his true fear in your hearts. The blessing of the Lord be upon all my servants, whom salute from me, Jo. Samford, Amy etc., Goldston, Pease, Chote etc., my good friends at Castlins and all my good neighbors, goodman Cole and his good wife, and all the rest.

Remember to come well furnished with linen, woollen, some more bedding, brass, pewter, leather bottles, drinking horns etc. let my son provide 12 axes of several sorts of the Braintree smith, or some other prime workman, whatever they cost, and some augers great and small, and many other necessities which I can't now think of, as candles, soap, and store of beef suet, etc.: once again farewell, my dear wife.

Thy faithful husband,  
JO WINTHROP.

Charl[es] to [w] in N England, July 23, 1630.

#### From the JOURNAL

1630

SEPTEMBER 30 About two in the morning, Mr. Isaac Johnson died; his wife, the lady Arbella, of the house of Lincoln, being dead about one month before. He was a holy man,

and wise, and died in sweet peace, leaving some part of his substance to the colony.

The wolves killed six calves at Salem, and they killed one wolf.

Thomas Morton adjudged to be imprisoned, till he were sent into England, and his house burnt down, for his many injuries offered to the Indians, and other misdemeanors. Capt Brook, master of the Gift, refused to carry him.

Finch, of Watertown, had his wigwam<sup>1</sup> burnt and all his goods.

Billington executed at Plymouth for murdering one

Mr. Phillips, the minister of Watertown, and others, had their hay burnt

The wolves killed some swine at Saugus

A cow died at Plymouth, and a goat at Boston, with eating Indian corn.

October 23 Mr. Rossiter, one of the assistants, died.

25 Mr Colburn (who was chosen deacon by the congregation a week before) was invested by imposition of hands of the minister and elder

The governor, upon consideration of the inconveniences which had grown in England by drinking one to another, restrained it at his own table, and wished others to do the like, so as it grew, by little and little, to disuse

29 The *Handmaid* arrived at Plymouth, having been twelve weeks at sea, and spent all her masts, and of twenty-eight cows she lost ten. She had about sixty passengers, who came all well, John Grant, master

Mr Goffe wrote to me, that his shipping this year had utterly undone him.

She brought out twenty-eight heifers, but brought but seventeen alive.

November 11. The master came to Boston with Capt. Standish and two gentlemen passengers, who came to plant here, but having no testimony, we would not receive them

10.—Firmun, of Watertown, had his wigwam burnt.

<sup>1</sup> Most colonists spent the first year or two in dug-outs or in "wigwams," made by fastening together the tops of saplings fixed firmly in the ground, and walled and roofed with Indian mats See G F Dow's *Every-day Life in Early New England* for illustrations

Divers had their haystacks burnt by burning the grass.

1632

July 5 At Watertown there was (in the view of divers witnesses) a great combat between a mouse and a snake; and, after a long fight, the mouse prevailed, and killed the snake. The pastor of Boston, Mr. Wilson, a very sincere, holy man, hearing of it, gave this interpretation. that the snake was the devil, the mouse was a poor contemptible people, which God had brought hither, which should overcome Satan here, and dispossess him of his kingdom

1633

February 26. Two little girls of the Governor's family were sitting under a great heap of logs, plucking of birds, and the wind driving the feathers into the house, the Governor's wife caused them to remove away. They were no sooner gone, but the whole heap of logs fell down in the place, and had crushed them to death, if the Lord, in his special providence, had not delivered them

[1648]

This puts me in mind of another child very strangely drowned a little before winter. The parents were also members of the church of Boston. The father had undertaken to maintain the milldam, and being at work upon it, (with some help he had hired,) in the afternoon of the last day of the week, night came upon them before they had finished what they intended, and his conscience began to put him in mind of the Lord's day, and he was troubled, yet went on and wrought an hour within night. The next day, after evening exercise, and after they had supped, the mother put two children to bed in the room where themselves did lie, and they went out to visit a neighbor. When they returned, they continued about an hour in the room, and missed not the child, but then the mother going to the bed, and not finding her youngest child, (a daughter about five years of age,) after much search she found it drowned in a well in her cellar, which was very observable, as

by a special hand of God, that the child should go out of that room into another in the dark, and then fall down at a trap door, or go down the stairs, and so into the well in the farther end of the cellar, the top of the well and the water being even with the ground. But the father, freely in the open congregation, did acknowledge it the righteous hand of God for his profaning his holy day against the checks of his own conscience.

1630-1648

1825

### [Winthrop's Speech on Liberty]

The most serious conflict in New England between the democratic idea of local autonomy and the opposed idea of centralized government came in 1645 The militia company, or "train-band," of the town of Hingham, becoming displeased with Lieutenant Kames, their commander, deposed him and elected another officer, named Allen, in his stead The ejected lieutenant, appealing to the government at Boston, obtained what the townsmen considered only equivocal or partial support, and they refused to reinstate him Summoned to trial by Winthrop as deputy governor, their leaders, headed by the minister at Hingham, Peter Hobart, a resolute champion of the authority of the local parish and town, vigorously defended themselves, charging that Winthrop had exceeded his rightful powers The case, bitterly and quite evenly contested, was decided in Winthrop's favor The speech with which he concluded the contest is important for its expression of the later Whig-Federalist-Republican trend of political belief in America.

The deputies<sup>1</sup> finding themselves now at the wall, and not daring to trust the elders with the cause, they sent to desire that six of themselves might come and confer with the magistrates, which being granted, they came, and at last came to this agreement, viz, the chief petitioners and the rest of the offenders were severally fined (all their fines not amounting to 50 pounds), the rest of the petitioners to bear equal share to 50 pounds more towards the charges of the court (two of the principal offenders were the deputies of the town, Joshua Hubbert and Bozone Allen, the first

was fined 20 pounds, and the other 5 pounds), lieutenant Emes to be under admonition, the deputy governor to be legally and publicly acquitted of all that was laid to his charge.

According to this agreement, presently after the lecture the magistrates and deputies took their places in the meeting house, and the people being come together, and the deputy governor placing himself within the bar, as at the time of the hearing, etc., the governor read the sentence of the court, without speaking any more, for the deputies had (by importunity) obtained a promise of silence from the magistrates. Then was the deputy governor desired by the court to go up and take his place again upon the bench, which he did accordingly, and, the court being about to arise, he desired leave for a little speech which was to this effect.—

I suppose something may be expected from me upon this charge that is befallen me, which moves me to speak now to you, yet I intend not to intermeddle in the proceedings of the court, or with any of the persons concerned therein Only I bless God that I see an issue of this troublesome business. I also acknowledge the justice of the court, and, for mine own part, I am well satisfied, I was publicly charged, and I am publicly and legally acquitted, which is all I did expect or desire. And though this be sufficient for my justification before men, yet not so before the God who hath seen so much amiss in my dispensations (and even in this affair) as calls me to be humble. For to be publicly and criminally charged in this court is matter of humiliation (and I desire to make a right use of it,) notwithstanding I be thus acquitted If her father had spit in her face, (saith the Lord concerning Miriam,) should she not have been ashamed seven days? Shame had lain upon her, whatever the occasion had been. I am unwilling to stay you from your urgent affairs, yet give me leave (upon this special occasion) to speak a little more to this assembly. It may be of some good use, to inform and rectify the judgments of some of the people, and may prevent such distempers as have arisen amongst us The great questions that have troubled the country are about the authority of the magistrates and the liberty of the people. It

<sup>1</sup> members of the lower house of the General Court, who had in general favored the Hingham men as against the "magistrates," or Council

is yourselves who have called us to this office, and, being called by you, we have our authority from God, in way of an ordinance, such as hath the image of God eminently stamped upon it, the contempt and violation whereof hath been vindicated with examples of divine vengeance. I entreat you to consider that, when you choose magistrates, you take them from among yourselves, men subject to like passions as you are. Therefore when you see infirmities in us, you should reflect upon your own, and that would make you bear the more with us, and not be severe censurers of the failings of your magistrates, when you have continual experience of the like infirmities in yourselves and others. We account him a good servant who breaks not his covenant. The covenant between you and us is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose, that we shall govern you and judge your causes by the rules of God's laws and our own, according to our best skill. When you agree with a workman to build you a ship or house, &c. he undertakes as well for his skill as for his faithfulness, for it is his profession, and you pay him for both. But, when you call one to be a magistrate, he doth not profess nor undertake to have sufficient skill for that office, nor can you furnish him with gifts, &c. therefore you must run the hazard of his skill and ability. But if he fail in faithfulness, which by his oath he is bound unto, that he must answer for. If it fall out that the case be clear to common apprehension, and the rule clear also, if he transgress here, the error is not in the skill, but in the evil of the will. It must be required of him. But if the case be doubtful, or the rule doubtful, to men of such understanding and parts as your magistrates are, if your magistrates should err here, yourselves must bear it.

For the other point concerning liberty, I observe a great mistake in the country about that. There is a twofold liberty, natural (I mean as our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists; it is a liberty to evil as well as to good. This liberty is incompatible and inconsistent with authority, and

cannot endure the least restraint of the most just authority. The exercise and maintaining of this liberty makes men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts: *omnes sumus licentia deteriores*. This is that great enemy of truth and peace, that wild beast, which all the ordinances of God are bent against, to restrain and subdue it. The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal; it may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions, amongst men themselves. This liberty is the proper end and object of authority, and cannot subsist without it, and it is a liberty to that only which is good, just, and honest. This liberty you are to stand for, with the hazard (not only of your goods, but) of your lives, if need be. Whatsoever crosseth this is not authority, but a distemper thereof. This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet, being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage, and a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free but in her subjection to her husband's authority. Such is the liberty of the church under the authority of Christ, her king and husband, his yoke is so easy and sweet to her as a bride's ornaments; and if through frowardness or wantonness, &c. she shake it off, at any time, she is at no rest in her spirit until she take it up again, and whether her lord smiles upon her, and embraceth her in his arms, or whether he frowns, or rebukes, or smites her, she apprehends the sweetness of his love in all, and is refreshed, supported, and instructed by every such dispensation of his authority over her. On the other side, ye know who they are that complain of this yoke and say, let us break their bands, &c. we will not have this man to rule over us. Even so, brethren, it will be between you and your magistrates. If you stand for your natural corrupt liberties, and will do what is good in your own eyes, you will not endure the least weight of authority, but will

murmur, and oppose, and be always striving to shake off that yoke; but if you will be satisfied to enjoy such civil and lawful liberties, such as Christ allows you, then will you quietly and cheerfully submit unto that authority which is set over you, in all the administrations of it, for your good. Wherein, if we fail at any time, we hope we shall be willing (by God's assistance) to hearken to

good advice from any of you, or in any other way of God; so shall your liberties be preserved, in upholding the honor and power of authority amongst you.

The deputy governor having ended his speech, the court arose, and the magistrates and deputies retired to attend their other affairs.

1645

1825

c. 1602 ~ Roger Williams ~ 1683

ROGER WILLIAMS, a Londoner, educated for the ministry at Pembroke College, Cambridge, migrated to New England in 1631, preached for a while at Plymouth, and settled as pastor of a church at Salem. Here his separatist views regarding church polity and his attacks upon granting lands not purchased from the Indians brought him into conflict with Winthrop and the magistrates, supported by the counsel of the Reverend John Cotton. To avoid being shipped back to England, Williams fled in the winter of 1636 to the shores of Narragansett Bay, where he founded Providence as "a shelter for persons distressed for conscience." Here he secured a separate charter and ruled according to his principles of toleration, despite difficulties with other dissenters and with the Quakers, whom he attacked vigorously in *George Fox Dugged Out of His Burrows* (1676). He greatly helped Massachusetts by keeping the Narragansett tribes loyal in the Pequot and later wars, corresponded amicably with the younger Governor Winthrop, and visited England in 1643 and 1651, where he fraternized with Cromwell and Milton and perhaps influenced their views.

In England in 1646 he attacked Cotton's arguments against unrestrained liberty of conscience, in his *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience*. When Cotton retorted in *The Bloody Tenent Washed and Made White in the Blood of the Lamb*, Williams countered with *The Bloody Tenent yet More Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's Efforts to Wash it in the Blood of the Lamb*. Both debaters argued from passages in the Bible, and in archaic, cumbersome, and heavily ornate style, but occasional sentences and phrases of the latter stand out for their boldness and eloquence. He maintained that "the sovereign, original, and foundation of civil power lies in the people," and "it is evident that such governments as are by them erected and established have no more power, nor for a longer time, than the civil power or people consenting or agreeing shall betrust them with. This is clear not only in reason but in the experience of all commonweals where the people are not



deprived of their natural freedom by the power of tyrants." In this assertion of the social contract theory and in his defense of liberty of conscience and worship, Williams was very far ahead of his contemporaries.

Roger Williams's most important writings are his controversial pamphlets. *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for the Cause of Conscience* (1644), *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* (1652); *The Hiresling Ministry None of Christ's* (1652), *Letter to the People of Providence* (1655); and his attack upon the Quakers, *George Fox Dugged out of His Burrows* (1676). They have been republished in the *Publications of the Narragansett Club* (Providence, 1866-1874). There are biographies by Oscar Straus (1894), E. J. Carpenter (1909), and Emily Easton (1930). V. L. Parrington, in *The Colonial Mind*, 62-75, makes a clear statement of Williams's significance in the political and religious thought of his time. This view has been expanded on the basis of new material unearthed in England by J. E. Ernst in *The Political Thought of Roger Williams* (1929). Ernst's *Roger Williams, New England Firebrand* (1932), the most recent biography, is enthusiastic and provocative but biased and inaccurate in quotation. See also G. A. Stead, "Roger Williams and the Massachusetts Bay," *New England Quarterly*, VII, 235-257 (June, 1934), Michael Freund, "Roger Williams, Apostle of Complete Religious Liberty," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, XXVI, 101-133 (Oct., 1933), and F. B. Wiener, "Roger Williams's Contribution to Modern Thought," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, XXVIII, 1-20 (1935).

Perhaps the clearest and most fair-minded account of Williams's controversy with Cotton is H. B. Parkes, "John Cotton and Roger Williams Debate Religious Toleration, 1644-1652," *New England Quarterly*, IV, 735-756 (Oct., 1931).

#### From THE BLOODY TENENT (1644)

##### [Certain Propositions]

FIFTHLY, all civil states with their officers of justice in their respective constitutions and administrations are proved essentially civil, and therefore not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual or Christian state and worship.

Sixthly, it is the will and command of God, that (since the coming of his son the Lord Jesus) a permission of the most paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or Antichristian consciences and worships, be granted to all men in all nations and countries, and they are only to be fought against with that sword which is only (in soul matters) able to conquer, to wit, the sword of God's Spirit, the Word of God.

Seventhly, the state of the Land of Israel, the kings and people thereof in peace and war, is proved figurative and ceremonial, and no pattern nor precedent for any kingdom or civil state in the world to follow.

Eighthly, God requireth not an uniformity of religion to be enacted and enforced in any

civil state, which enforced uniformity (sooner or later) is the greatest occasion of civil war, ravishing of conscience, persecution of Christ Jesus in his servants, and of the hypocrisy and destruction of millions of souls.

Ninthly, in holding an enforced uniformity of religion in a civil state, we must necessarily disclaim our desires and hopes of the Jews' conversion to Christ.

Tenthly, an enforced uniformity of religion throughout a nation or civil state confounds the civil and religious, denies the principles of Christianity and civility, and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Eleventhly, the permission of other consciences and worships than a state professeth, only can (according to God) procure a firm and lasting peace, (good assurance being taken according to the wisdom of the civil state for uniformity of civil obedience from all sorts).

Twelfthly, lastly, true civility and Christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jew or Gentile.

[*The Magistrate and Civil Liberty*]

If the end of spiritual or church power is *bonum spirituale*, a spiritual good, and the end of civil or state power is *bonum temporale*, a temporal good, and secondly, if the magistrate have no spiritual power to attain to his temporal end, no more than a church hath any temporal

A contradiction to make the magistrate supreme judge in spiritual causes, and yet to have no spiritual power

power to attain to her spiritual end, as is confessed. I demand if this be not a contradiction against their own disputes,<sup>1</sup> tenets, and practices touching that question of persecution for cause of conscience. For if the magistrate be supreme judge (and so consequently give supreme judgment, sentence and determination) in matters of the First Table,<sup>2</sup> and of the church, and be *custos utriusque tabulae*, keeper of both Tables (as they speak) and yet have no spiritual power as is affirmed, how can he determine what the true church and ordinances are, and then set them up with the power of the sword? How can he give judgment of a false church, a false ministry, a false doctrine, false ordinances, and with a civil sword pull them down, if he have no spiritual power, authority or commission from Christ Jesus for these ends and purposes?

Further I argue thus. If the civil officer of state must determine, judge and punish in spiritual causes, his power, authority and commission must be either spiritual or civil, or else he hath none at all, and so acts without a commission and warrant from the Lord Jesus, and so consequently stands guilty at the Bar of Christ Jesus to answer for such his practice as a transcendent delinquent.

Now for civil power, these worthy authors confess that the government of the civil magistrate extends no further than over the bodies and goods of the subject, and therefore hath no civil power over the soul, and therefore (say I) not in soul-causes.

The civil magistrate confessed to have no civil power over the souls of men

Secondly, it is here confessed in this passage,

that to attain his civil end or *bonum temporale*, he hath no spiritual power, and therefore of necessity out of their own Nor spiritual mouths must they be judged for provoking the magistrate, without either civil or spiritual power, to judge, punish and persecute in spiritual causes; and to fear and tremble, lest they come near those frogs which proceed out of the mouth of the dragon and beast and false prophet,<sup>1</sup> who by the same arguments which the authors here use, stir up the kings of the earth to make war against the Lamb Christ Jesus, and his followers. *Revel. 17.*

In the next place I observe upon the point of delinquency, such a confusion, as heaven and earth may stand amazed at. If the church offend (say they) after advice refused, in conclusion the magistrate must redress, that is, punish the church (that is, in church offenses and cases) by a course of civil justice

On the other side, if the civil magistrate offend after admonition used, and not prevailing, in conclusion the church proceeds to censure, that is, to excommunication, as is afterward more largely proved by them

Now I demand, if the church be a delinquent, who shall judge? It is answered, the magistrate. Again, if the magistrate be a delinquent, I ask who shall judge? It is answered, the church. Whence I observe, (which is monstrous in all cases in the world) that one person, to wit, the church or magistrate, shall be at one time the delinquent at the bar, and the judge upon the bench. This is clear thus. The church must judge when the magistrate offends; and yet the magistrate must judge when the church offends; and so consequently in this case must judge whether she condemn civil authority in the Second Table for thus dealing with him, or whether she have broken the rules of the First Table, of which (say they) God hath made him keeper and conservator. And therefore, though the church

The magistrate and the church, by the author's grounds, at one and the same time, in one and the same cause, made by the judges on the bench, and delinquents at the bar

<sup>1</sup> i.e., those of Mr Cotton and his associates, who had defended the punishment of false believers by the civil magistrates <sup>2</sup> the First Table, the laws governing the church, the Second Table, civil laws

<sup>1</sup> Revelations 15 13 "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet "

make him a delinquent at the bar, yet by their confession God hath made him a judge on the bench. What blood, what tumults hath been, and must be spilt upon these grounds?

*Peace.* Dear truth, no question but the church may punish the magistrate spiritually in spiritual cases; and the magistrate may punish the church, civilly, in civil cases. But that for one and the same cause the church must punish the magistrate, and the magistrate punish the church, this seems monstrous, and needs explication.

*Truth.* Sweet peace, I illustrate with this instance: A true church of Christ (of which,

An illustration demonstrating that the civil magistrate cannot have power over the church in spiritual or church causes

according to the author's supposition, the magistrate is a member) chooseth and calls one of her members to office; the magistrate opposeth; the church,

persuaded that the magistrate's exceptions are insufficient (according to her privilege, which these authors maintain against the magistrate's prohibition) proceeds to ordain her officer. The magistrate chargeth the church to have made an unfit and unworthy choice, and therefore according to his place and power, and according to his conscience and judgment he suppresseth such an officer, and makes void the church choice. Upon this the church complains against the magistrate's violation of her privileges given her by Christ Jesus, and cries out that the magistrate is turned persecutor, and not prevailing with admonition, she proceeds to excommunication against him. The magistrate, according to his conscience, endures not such profanation of ordinances as he conceives, and therefore if no advice and admonition prevail, he proceeds against such obstinate abusers of Christ's holy ordinances, (as the authors grant he may) in civil court of justice, yea and (I add according to the pattern of

Israel) cuts them off by the sword, as obstinate usurpers and profaners of the holy things of Christ.

I demand what help hath any poor church of Christ in this case, by maintaining this power of the magistrate to punish the church of Christ—I mean in spiritual and soul-cases—for otherwise I question not but he may put all the members of the church to death justly,

if they commit crimes worthy thereof, as Paul spake, *Acts* 23. xxv: 11.

Shall the church here fly to the pope's sanctuary against emperors and princes excommunicate, to wit, give away their crowns, kingdoms or dominions, and invite foreign princes to make war upon them and their territories? The authors surely will disclaim this; and yet I shall prove their tenets tend directly unto such a practice.

Or secondly, shall she say the magistrate is not a true magistrate, because not able to judge and determine in such cases? Thus, their confession will not give them leave to say, because they cannot deny unbelievers to be lawful magistrates. and yet it shall appear (notwithstanding their confession to the contrary) their tenets imply that none but a magistrate after their own conscience is a lawful magistrate.

Therefore, thirdly, they must ingenuously and honestly confess, that if it be the duty of the magistrate to punish the church in spiritual cases, he must then judge according to his conscience and persuasion, whatever his conscience be; and then let all men judge unto what a woeful state they bring both the civil magistrate and church of Christ, by such a church-destroying and state-destroying doctrine.

1578 -- *Nathaniel Ward* -- 1652

THE MOST outspoken antagonist of religious toleration in New England was Nathaniel Ward, one of the few legal-trained minds in the Bay Colony. After taking his degree at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1603, he became a learned writer and lawyer, an acquaintance of Sir Francis Bacon, and, during his travels abroad, intimate in the household of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I and wife of Frederick, Elector Palatine.

He became a clergyman, but fell into a serious disagreement with Archbishop Laud, as a result of which he emigrated to Massachusetts in 1634. For two or three years he was minister at Agawam [Ipswich], but ill health forced him to give up his pastorate, although it did not prevent his serving on a commission to form a code of laws for the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He wrote and, in the year after his return to England in 1646, published his *Simple Cbler of Aggawam in America*, under the pseudonym of Theodore de la Guard. This is a satire upon what Ward regarded as laxness and changeableness of English religion, morals, and manners of his time. In contrast with Roger Williams, he exhibits the general attitude of his century regarding religious tolerance. He wrote with an Elizabethan zest and vigor, with fantastic puns, constant antitheses, and ingenious invective, whether denouncing religious schisms or the vagaries of women's fashions. Over his mantelpiece was the motto, *Sobrie, juste, pie, laete*, "[Live] prudently, justly, reverently, joyfully."

*The Simple Cbler* has been reprinted in facsimile (1906) by the Ipswich Historical Society, and in the *Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints* (1937). The standard biography is that by J. W. Dean (1868). See also the chapter on Ward in S. E. Morison's *Builders of the Bay Colony* (1930), and V. L. Parrington, *The Colonial Mind* (1927), 76-81.

From THE SIMPLE COBLER  
OF AGGAWAM

[*Argument against Religious  
Toleration*]

HE that is willing to tolerate any religion, or discrepant way of religion, besides his own, unless it be in matters merely indifferent, either doubts of his own, or is not sincere in it. 10

He that is willing to tolerate any unsound opinion, that his own may also be tolerated, though never so sound, will for a need hang God's Bible at the Devil's girdle.

Every toleration of false religions or opinions hath as many errors and sins in it, as all the false religions and opinions it tolerates, and one sound one more.

That state that will give liberty of conscience in matters of religion, must give liberty of conscience and conversation in their moral laws, or else the fiddle will be out of tune, and some of the strings crack.

He that will rather make an irreligious quarrel with other religions than try the truth of his own by valuable arguments and peaceable sufferings, either his religion, or himself is irreligious.

Experience will teach churches and Christians that it is far better to live in a state united, though a little corrupt, than in a state whereof some part is incorrupt, and all the rest divided

I am not altogether ignorant of the eight rules given by orthodox divines about giving tolerations, yet with their favor I dare affirm,

That there is no rule given by God for any state to give an affirmative toleration to any false religion or opinion whatsoever; they must connive in some cases, but may not concede in any

That the state of England (so far as my intelligence serves) might in time have prevented with ease and may yet without any great difficulty deny both toleration, and irregular connivances *salva republica*<sup>1</sup>

That if the state of England shall either willingly tolerate, or weakly connive at such courses, the church of that kingdom will sooner become the devil's dancing-school, than God's temple, the civil state a bear-garden, than an exchange the whole realm a Pais Bas,<sup>2</sup> than an England. And what pity it is, that that country which hath been the staple of truth to all Christendom, should now become the aviary of errors to the whole world, let every fearing heart judge

I take liberty of conscience to be nothing but a freedom from sin and error *Conscientia in tantum libera in quantum ab errore liberata*<sup>3</sup> And liberty of error nothing but a prison for conscience Then small will be the kindness of a state to build such prisons for their subjects

The Scripture saith, there is nothing makes free but truth, and truth saith, there is no truth but one: If the states of the world would make it their sumptuous<sup>4</sup> care to preserve this one truth in its purity and authority, it would ease you of all other political cares. I am sure Satan makes it his grand, if not only task, to adulterate truth, falsehood is his sole sceptre, whereby he first ruffled, and ever since ruined the world.

If truth be but one, methinks all the opinionists in England should not be all in that one truth, some of them I doubt are out. He that can extract an unity out of such a disparity, or contract such a disparity into an unity; had need be a better artist, than ever was Drebell.

If two centers (as we may suppose) be in one circle, and lines drawn from both to all the points of the compass, they will certainly cross one another, and probably cut through the centers themselves.

There is talk of an universal toleration. I would talk as loud as I could against it, did I know what more apt and reasonable sacrifice England could offer to God for his late performing all his heavenly truths than an universal toleration of all hellish errors, or how they shall make an universal reformation, but by making Christ's academy the Devil's university, where any man may commence<sup>1</sup> heretic *per saltum*<sup>2</sup>, where he that is *filius diabolicus*, or *simpliciter pessimus*,<sup>3</sup> may have his grace to go to Hell *cum publico privilegio*<sup>4</sup>, and carry as many after him, as he can .

### {Censure of Women's Fashions}

I can hardly forbear to commend to the world a saying of a lady living sometime with the queen of Bohemia, I know not where she found it, but it is pity it should be lost

*The world is full of care, much like unto a bubble,  
Women and care, and care and women, and  
women and care and trouble*

The verses are even enough for such odde pegmas,<sup>5</sup> I can make my self sick at any time with comparing the dazzling splendor wherewith our gentlewomen were embellished in some former habits, with the gut-foundered goosedom, wherewith they are now surcingle<sup>6</sup> and debauched. We have about five or six of them in our colony- if I see any of them accidentally, I cannot cleanse my fancy of them for a month after. I have been a solitary widower almost twelve years, purposed lately

<sup>1</sup> without injury to the state    <sup>2</sup> Pais-Bas, the Low Countries a contemptuous allusion to the Netherlands as harboring a diversity of religions  
<sup>3</sup> Conscience is free to the extent that it is liberated from error    <sup>4</sup> most important (*summo opere*)

<sup>5</sup> set up practice as    <sup>6</sup> at a single bound (i.e., without any preliminary degree or training)    <sup>7</sup> son of the Devil, or utterly vicious    <sup>8</sup> by public authority  
<sup>9</sup> crude verse prologues for plays, like Quince's in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, I    <sup>10</sup> belted in (a surcingle is a saddle girth)

to make a step over to my native country for a yoke-fellow: but when I consider how women there have tripe-wifed themselves with their cladments, I have no heart to the voyage, lest their nauseous shapes and the sea should work too sorely upon my stomach. I speak sadly, methinks it should break the hearts of Englishmen, to see so many goodly Englishwomen imprisoned in French cages, peering out of their hood-holes for some men of mercy to help them with a little wit, and nobody relieves them.

It is a more common than convenient saying, that nine tailors make a man, it were well if nineteen could make a woman to her mind: if tailors were men indeed, well furnished but with mere moral principles, they would disdain to be led about like apes, by such mimic marmosets.<sup>1</sup> It is a most unworthy thing for

<sup>1</sup> a species of tiny monkeys

men that have bones in them, to spend their lives in making fiddle-cases for fatulous women's fancies, which are the very pettitoes of infirmity, the giblets of perquisquilian toys.<sup>1</sup> I am so charitable to think that most of that mystery<sup>2</sup> would work the cheerfuller while they live, if they might be well discharged of the tiring slavery of misturning women: it is no little labor to be continually putting up Englishwomen into outlandish casks; who if they be not shifted anew once in a few months, grow too sour for their husbands. What this trade will answer for themselves when God shall take measure of tailors' consciences is beyond my skill to imagine.

1645-1646

1647

<sup>1</sup> "Pettitoes" (pigs' feet) and "giblets" represent articles of food of little value, "perquisquilian toys," worthless trifles <sup>2</sup> trade

## Two Seventeenth-Century Elegies

THE MOST popular type of poetry in the early colonies, particularly in New England, was the funeral elegy. This was most commonly in pentameter couplets, crabbed in movement, ornamented with laborious "metaphysical" conceits, and furnished with the stock imagery of funeral trappings, the grave, and the personification of Death—a type of imagery dear to the Calvinistic imagination. Most of the authors—and most of the subjects—were ministers, who exercised their Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard learning in the ingenuity of their conceits. For an example of the broadside elegy, usually printed with a border of skeletons and other grisly insignia of death, see Benjamin Tompson's "A Neighbor's Tears" on page 58, following.

One New England and one Virginian elegy are given herewith. The first is by the Reverend John Cotton (1585-1652), the most learned and respected minister and one of the most influential persons in early Massachusetts. A Cambridge graduate who came to be pastor of the First Church in Boston in 1633, he soon found himself embroiled in controversy with independent zealots and schismatics in the colony. A moderate and kindly man, he realized the need of church unity during the perilous years of settlement, in opposing the heathen Indians, the Catholic French, and the Anglican hierarchy at home. Thus he was forced into support of and participation in the exclusion and banishment of Roger Williams and Anne

Hutchinson. He stands, accordingly, midway between the dogmatic intolerance of Nathaniel Ward and the complete toleration of Williams. A prolific writer, chiefly on religious topics, his prose is clear but lacking in any distinction. His catechism, *Spiritual Milk for Babies*, was the basis of that used in the many editions of *The New England Primer*.

Perhaps the most eloquent verse written in the American colonies in the seventeenth century was the anonymous elegy "Bacon's Epitaph, Written by His Man." Nathaniel Bacon, leader of a popular insurrection against the tyrannical and inefficient royal governor of Virginia, died at the height of his success, in 1676. The elegy is included in a prose manuscript called *The Burwell Papers*, the best of several contemporary accounts of the rebellion, whose writer was pretty surely another John Cotton (born c. 1641), planter and merchant, who was then living at Queen's Creek, York County, Virginia. Recently, J. B. Hubbell has presented plausible evidence to show that Cotton was the author ("John and Ann Cotton of 'Queen's Creek,' Virginia," in *American Literature*, X, 179-201). In its language and spirit this elegy suggests the dignity and muscularity of John Donne and the later Elizabethan poets.

For a general discussion and illustrations of broadside elegies, see John W. Draper, *The Funeral Elegy and English Romanticism* (1929), Chap. VI.

John Cotton's chief works *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644), *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645); *Spiritual Milk for Babies* (1646), *The Bloody Tenent, Washed and Made White in the Blood of the Lamb* (1647), and *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* (1648). His poem on Hooker was printed in Nathaniel Morton's *New England's Memorial* (1669). Lives of Cotton have been written by A. W. McClure (1846) and J. Norton (1834). For biography and criticism see also *DAB*, M. C. Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period*, I, 210-216, I. M. Calder, "John Cotton and the New Haven Colony," *New England Quarterly*, III, 82-94, H. B. Parkes, "John Cotton and Roger Williams Debate Toleration," *New England Quarterly*, IV, 735-756, V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, I, 27-37; J. H. Tuttle, "Writings of Rev. John Cotton," in *Bibliographical Essays, a Tribute to Wilberforce Eames* (1924), 365-380.

The *Burwell Papers* were first printed by the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1814 and again, in a corrected form, by the same Society in its *Proceedings* (1866-1867). See M. C. Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period*, I, 69-80.

#### ON MY REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER, MR. THOMAS HOOKER

LATE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH AT  
HARTFORD ON CONNECTICUT

Hooker, one of the most influential, eloquent, and liberal of the early ministers in the colonies, came in 1633 and in 1636 took his entire congregation to Connecticut, where they founded Hartford.

Cotton's poem was written shortly after Hooker's death in 1647 (See Perry Miller, "Thomas Hooker and the Democracy of Early Connecticut," *New England Quarterly*, IV, 663-712).

To see three things was holy Austin's<sup>1</sup> wish,  
Rome in her Flower, Christ Jesus in the Flesh,  
And Paul i'th Pulpit; Lately men might see,  
Two first, and more, in Hooker's Ministry.

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine

Zion in Beauty is a fairer sight,  
Than Rome in Flower, with all her Glory  
dight:

Yet Zion's Beauty did most clearly shine,  
In Hooker's Rule and Doctrine; both Divine

Christ in the Spirit is more than Christ in  
Flesh, 9  
Our Souls to quicken, and our States to bless:  
Yet Christ in Spirit brake forth mightily,  
In Faithful Hooker's searching Ministry.

Paul in the Pulpit, Hooker could not reach,  
Yet did He Christ in Spirit so lively Preach  
That living Hearers thought He did inherit  
A double Portion of Paul's lively spirit.

Prudent in Rule, in Argument quick, full  
Fervent in Prayer, in Preaching powerful  
That well did learned Ames record bear,  
The like to Him He never wont to hear 20

'Twas of Geneva's Worthies said, with  
wonder,  
(Those Worthies Three) Farell was wont to  
thunder;

Viret, like Rain, on tender grass to shower,  
But Calvin, lively Oracles to Pour.

All these in Hooker's spirit did remain  
A Son of Thunder, and a shower of Rain,  
A pourer forth of lively Oracles,  
In saving souls, the sum of miracles

Now blessed Hooker, thou art set on high,  
Above the thankless world and cloudy sky:  
Do thou of all thy labor reap the Crown, 31  
Whilst we here reap the seed, which thou hast  
sown

c. 1647

#### BACON'S EPITAPH, MADE BY HIS MAN

DEATH, why so cruel? What! no other way  
To manifest thy spleen, but thus to slay.  
Our hopes of safety, liberty, our all,  
Which, through thy tyranny, with him must  
fall

To its late chaos? Had thy rigid force  
Been dealt by retail, and not thus in gross,  
Grief had been silent. Now we must com-  
plain,

Since thou, in him, hast more than thousand  
slain,  
Whose lives and safeties did so much depend  
On him their life, with him their lives must  
end. 10

If't be a sin to think Death bribed can be  
We must be guilty; say 't was bribery  
Guided the fatal shaft. Virginia's foes,  
To whom for secret crimes just vengeance  
owes

Deserved plagues, dreading their just desert,  
Corrupted Death by Paracelsian art  
Him to destroy; whose well tried courage  
such,  
Their heartless hearts, nor arms, nor strength  
could touch.

Who now must heal those wounds, or stop  
that blood  
The Heathen made, and drew into a flood? 20  
Who is't must plead our cause? Nor trump,  
nor drum,

Nor deputations, these, alas! are dumb  
And cannot speak Our arms (though ne'er  
so strong)

Will want the aid of his commanding tongue,  
Which conquered more than Caesar. He o'er-  
threw

Only the outward frame, this could subdue  
The rugged works of nature Souls replete  
With dull chill cold, lie'd animate with heat  
Drawn forth of reason's lumbe In a word,  
Mars and Minerva both in him concurred 30  
For arts, for arms, whose pen and sword  
alike

As Cato's did, may admiration strike  
Into his foes, while they confess withal  
It was their guilt styled him a criminal.  
Only this difference does from truth proceed:  
They in the guilt, he in the name must bleed.  
While none shall dare his obsequies to sing  
In deserved measures, until time shall bring  
Truth crowned with freedom, and from dan-  
ger free

To sound his praises to posterity. 40

Here let him rest, while we this truth re-  
port,

He's gone from hence unto a higher Court  
To plead his cause, where he by this doth  
know

Whether to Caesar he was friend, or foe.

c. 1676

1814



1631 ~ *Michael Wigglesworth* ~ 1705

MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH was brought from England to New Haven at the age of seven, was graduated from Harvard in 1651, and later became a fellow and tutor of the college. Ordained in 1656, he was pastor of and physician at Malden, in Massachusetts Bay, for almost fifty years. Distressed during the earlier years because ill-health prevented him from performing his pastoral duties, he resolved to serve the church with his pen and so produced in 1662 *The Day of Doom*, designed to present the Calvinistic conception of the rewards of righteous and sinful persons at the Last Judgment. Though it seems severe and startling to modern readers, it was currently accepted by Calvinists in New and Old England and enjoyed an enormous vogue for a century or more.

*The Day of Doom or a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment* was published in 1662 and many times reissued. W. H. Burr and J. W. Dean's modernized reprint (1867) of the first edition includes Wigglesworth's autobiographical sketch in its introduction. A more recent reprint of the poem is that edited by K. B. Murdock (1929). Wigglesworth's other important poems are *God's Controversy with New England* (1662) and *Meat out of the Easter* (1669). The latter was reprinted in the *Yale University Library Gazette*, V, 46-47 (January, 1931). J. W. Dean's *Memoir* (1871) is excessively rare. M. B. Jones's "Notes for a Bibliography of Michael Wigglesworth's *Day of Doom* and *Meat out of the Easter*" appeared in the *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, XXXIX, Part I, 77-84 (April, 1929). See also F. O. Matthiessen, "Michael Wigglesworth, a Puntan Artist," *New England Quarterly*, I, 491-504 (October, 1928).

## From THE DAY OF DOOM

[*The Eve of Judgment*]

It is difficult for modern readers who no longer take Wigglesworth's theology seriously to avoid reciting his verses in the jangling movement into which they so easily fall. Needless to say, they were not so rendered by contemporary readers and are capable of being read with a slowness and earnestness which give dignity to the description and to the dialogue between Jesus and the souls of the dead.

STILL was the night, serene and bright,  
when all men sleeping lay,  
Calm was the season, and carnal reason  
thought so 't would last for aye  
"Soul, take thine ease, let sorrow cease,  
much good thou hast in store."  
This was their song, their cups among,  
the evening before.

Wallowing in all kinds of sin,  
vile wretches lay secure 10  
The best of men had scarcely then  
their lamps kept in good ure<sup>1</sup>  
Virgins unwise, who through disguise  
amongst the best were numbered,  
Had closed their eyes, yea and the wise  
through sloth and frailty slumbered;

Like as of old, when man grew bold  
God's threatenings to contemn,  
Who stopped their ear, and would not hear,  
when mercy warned them 20  
But took their course, without remorse,  
till God began to pour  
Destruction the world upon  
in a tempestuous shower:

They put away the evil day,  
and drowned their cares and fears,  
Till drowned were they, and swept away  
by vengeance unawares,  
So at the last, whilst men sleep fast  
in their security,  
Surprised they are in such a snare  
as cometh suddenly.

For at midnight brake forth a light,  
which turned the night to day,  
And speedily an hideous cry  
did all the world dismay  
Sinners awake, their hearts do ache,  
trembling their loins surpriseth;  
Amazed with fear, by what they hear,  
each one of them ariseth.

They rush from beds with giddy heads,  
and to their windows run,  
Viewing this light, which shines more bright  
than doth the noon-day sun  
Straightway appears (they see't with tears)  
the Son of God most dread,  
Who with his train comes on amain  
to judge both quick and dead. . . .

[*The Summons*]

No heart so bold, but now grows cold  
and almost dead with fear  
No eye so dry, but now can cry,  
and pour out many a tear  
Earth's potentates and powerful states,  
captains and men of might  
Are quite abashed, their courage dashed  
at this most dreadful sight

Mean men lament, great men do rent  
their robes, and tear their hair.  
They do not spare their flesh to tear  
through horrible despair.  
All kindreds wail all hearts do fail  
horror the world doth fill  
With weeping eyes, and loud outcries,  
yet knows not how to kill.

Some hide themselves in caves and delves,  
in places underground:  
Some rashly leap into the deep,  
to scape by being drowned.

Some to the rocks (O senseless blocks!)  
and woody mountains run,  
That there they might this fearful sight,  
and dreaded presence shun.

In vain do they to mountains say,  
"Fall on us and us hide  
From Judge's ire, more hot than fire,  
for who may it abide"  
No hiding place can from his face,  
sinners at all conceal,  
Whose flaming eye hid things doth spy,  
and darkest things reveal "

The Judge draws nigh, exalted high  
upon a lofty throne,  
Amidst the throng of angels strong,  
lo, Israel's Holy One!  
The excellence of whose presence  
and awful majesty,  
Amazeth nature, and every creature,  
doth more than terrify.

The mountains smoke, the hills are shook,  
the earth is rent and torn,  
As if she should be clear dissolved,  
or from the center borne  
The sea doth roar, forsakes the shore,  
and shrinks away for fear  
The wild beasts flee into the sea,  
so soon as he draws near,

Whose glory bright, whose wondrous might  
whose power imperial,  
So far surpass whatever was  
in realms terrestrial  
That tongues of men (nor angel's pen)  
cannot the same express,  
And therefore I must pass it by,  
lest speaking should transgress

Before his throne a trumpet is blown,  
proclaiming the day of doom  
Forthwith he cries, "Ye dead arise,  
and unto judgment come."  
No sooner said, but 'tis obeyed;  
sepulchers opened are  
Dead bodies all rise at his call,  
and 's mighty power declare

Both sea and land, at his command,  
their dead at once surrender:  
The fire and air constrained are  
also their dead to tender.

The mighty word of this great Lord  
links body and soul together  
Both of the just, and the unjust,  
to part no more forever. . .

120

[*Judgment of the Infants*]

Then to the bar all they drew near  
who died in infancy,  
And never had or good or bad  
effected pers'nally,  
But from the womb unto the tomb  
were straightway carrièd,  
Or at the least ere they transgressed)  
who thus began to plead

"If for our own transgression,  
or disobedience,  
We here did stand at thy left hand,  
just were the recompense,  
But Adam's guilt our souls hath spilt,  
his fault is charged upon us,  
And that alone hath overthrown  
and utterly undone us

130

"Not we, but he ate of the tree,  
whose fruit was interdicted;  
Yet on us all of his sad fall  
the punishment's inflicted  
How could we sin that had not been,  
or how is his sin our,  
Without consent, which to prevent  
we never had the power"

140

"O great Creator why was our nature  
depraved and forlorn?  
Why so defiled, and made so vild,  
whilst we were yet unborn?  
If it be just, and needs we must  
transgressors reckoned be,  
Thy mercy, Lord, to us afford,  
which sinners hath set free.

150

"Behold we see Adam set free,  
and saved from his trespass,  
Whose sinful fall hath spilt us all,  
and brought us to this pass  
Canst thou deny us once to try,  
or grace to us to tender,  
When he finds grace before thy face,  
who was the chief offender?"

160

Then answered the Judge most dread:  
"God doth such doom forbid,  
That men should die eternally  
for what they never did.  
But what you call old Adam's fall,  
and only his trespass,  
You call amiss to call it his,  
both his and yours it was.

"He was designed of all mankind  
to be a public head; 170  
A common root, whence all should shoot,  
and stood in all their stead.  
He stood and fell, did ill or well,  
not for himself alone,  
But for you all, who now his fall  
and trespass would disown.

"If he had stood, then all his brood  
had been establishèd  
In God's true love never to move,  
nor once away to tread; 180  
Then all his race my Father's grace  
should have enjoyed forever,  
And wicked sprites by subtle sleights  
could them have harmed never.

"Would you have grieved to have received  
through Adam so much good,  
As had been your for evermore,  
if he at first had stood?  
Would you have said, 'We ne'er obeyed  
nor did thy laws regard, 190  
It ill befits with benefits,  
us, Lord, to so reward?'"

"Since then to share in his welfare,  
you could have been content,  
You may with reason share in his treason,  
and in the punishment  
Hence you were born in state forlorn,  
with natures so depraved;  
Death was your due because that you  
had thus yourselves behaved. 200

"You think, 'If we had been as he,  
whom God did so betray,  
We to our cost would ne'er have lost  
all for a paltry lust.'  
Had you been made in Adam's stead,  
you would like things have wrought,  
And so into the self-same woe,  
yourselves and yours have brought.

"I may deny you once to try,  
or grace to you to tender,  
Though he finds grace before my face  
who was the chief offender;  
Else should my grace cease to be grace,  
for it would not be free,  
If to release whom I should please  
I have no liberty.

210

"If upon one what's due to none  
I frankly shall bestow,  
And on the rest shall not think best  
compassion's skirts to throw,  
Whom injure I? Will you envy  
and grudge at others' weal?  
Or me accuse, who do refuse  
yourselves to help and heal?

220

"Am I alone of what's my own,  
no master or no lord?  
And if I am, how can you claim  
what I to some afford?  
Will you demand grace at my hand,  
and challenge what is mine?  
Will you teach me whom to set free,  
and thus my grace confine?

230

"You sinners are, and such a share  
as sinners, may expect;  
Such you shall have, for I do save  
none but mine own elect.  
Yet to compare your sin with their  
who lived a longer time,  
I do confess yours is much less,  
though every sin's a crime

240

"A crime it is, therefore in bliss  
you may not hope to dwell,  
But unto you I shall allow  
the easiest room in hell."  
The glorious King thus answering,  
they cease, and plead no longer,  
Their consciences must needs confess  
his reasons are the stronger

Thus all men's pleas the Judge with ease  
doth answer and confute,  
Until that all, both great and small,  
are silenced and mute  
Vain hopes are cropped, all mouths are  
stopped,  
sinners have nought to say,  
But that 'tis just and equal most  
they should be damned for aye

250

1662

1612 ~ *Anne Bradstreet* ~ 1672

THE MOST noteworthy American poet of the seventeenth century was Anne Dudley Bradstreet, daughter of Thomas Dudley and wife of Simon Bradstreet, both governors of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. She was born in 1612, probably at Northampton, England, where her father, a man of some wealth and culture, was steward to the Earl of Lincoln, a Puritan nobleman. As a girl she was instructed in the languages, music and dancing, theology, and natural science, and read with enthusiasm the poetry of Francis Quarles and of Joshua Sylvester, whose rendition of the French poet Du Bartas's *La Semaine* the youthful Dryden also admired above Spenser. At sixteen she married and two years later left her comfortable English home with her husband and parents, in Winthrop's company, for the hardships and pioneer conditions of life in New England. Amid the tasks of the wife of a prominent official and the mother of eight children, she found time to devote to the pursuit of poetry. By 1650 her output and her local fame seemed to call for

publication in London. The pretentious title *The Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung Up in America* was not of her choosing. The volume comprised chiefly a set of didactic "quarternions"—the four elements, four seasons, four ages of man, etc.—and a versified summary of the four monarchies, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, based upon Raleigh's *History of the World*. The verse suffers from unskilled meter and too heavy moralizing, but her later work shows poetic growth and a shift from the tutelage of Sylvester to that of Spenser, or at least of the minor Spenserians. This was not published until 1678, in Boston, six years after her death in that town. The chief addition in the collection was her best long poem, "Contemplations," a moralizing discourse with some genuine feeling for natural scenes, in seven-line stanza, the last line, as in Spenser, being a hexameter. Several intimate lyrics and a set of prose "Meditations Divine and Moral," for her children, were left in manuscript. Probably no English poetess of her day surpassed her later work, and despite much that is dull and irregular in it, Nathaniel Ward and John Norton were not mistaken in acclaiming her as the most genuine poet in America whose work was known to her contemporaries.

The best edition of Mrs Bradstreet's work is *The Works of Anne Bradstreet in Prose and Verse* (Charlestown, 1867, reprinted, 1932), excellently edited by John Harvard Ellis. This is based upon the posthumous *Several Poems* of 1678, with additional poems and prose, and biographical and critical material. A modernized edition by Charles E. Norton, a descendant, was published in 1897. For her life, there is a biography by Helen Campbell, *Anne Bradstreet and Her Time* (1891), a sympathetic sketch in S. E. Morison's *Builders of the Bay Colony* (1930), and the *DAB* article by L. N. Richardson. Oscar Wegelin has compiled "A Checklist of Editions of the Poems of Anne Bradstreet, with Several Additional Books Relating to Her," in the *American Book Collector*, IV, 15-16.

## PROLOGUE

## 1

To sing of wars, of captains, and of kings,  
Of cities founded, common-wealths begun,  
For my mean pen are too superior things,  
Or how they all or each their dates have  
run.

Let poets and historians set these forth;  
My obscure lines shall not so dim their worth.

## 2

But when my wondring eyes and envious heart  
Great Bargas' sugar'd lines do but read o'er,  
Fool I do grudge the Muses did not part  
'Twixt him and me that overfluent store, 10  
A Bargas can do what a Bargas will,  
But simple I according to my skill.

## 3

From school-boy's tongue no rhet'rick we  
expect,

Nor yet a sweet consort<sup>1</sup> from broken strings,  
Nor perfect beauty, where's a main defect.  
My foolish, broken, blemish'd Muse so sings;  
And this to mend, alas, no art is able,  
'Cause nature made it so irreparable.

## 4

Nor can I, like that fluent sweet-tongu'd  
Greek,<sup>2</sup>

Who lis'd at first, in future times speak  
plain 20

By art he gladly found what he did seek  
A full requital of his striving pain.  
Art can do much, but thus maxim's most sure.  
A weak or wounded brain admits no cure

<sup>1</sup> harmony<sup>2</sup> Demosthenes

5

I am obnoxious to each carping tongue  
Who says my hand a needle better fits,  
A poet's pen, all scorn I should thus wrong;  
For such despite they cast on female wits,  
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,  
They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance

6

But sure the antique Greeks were far more  
mild, 31  
Else of our sex why feigned they those Nine  
And poesy made Calliope's own child?  
So 'mongst the rest they placed the arts divine  
But this weak knot they<sup>1</sup> will full soon untie—  
The Greeks did nought but play the fools and  
lie.

7

Let Greeks be Greeks, and women what they  
are,  
Men have precedence and still excel  
It is but vain unjustly to wage war—  
Men can do best, and women know it well 40  
Preeminence in all and each is yours,  
Yet grant some small acknowledgment of  
ours.

8

And oh, ye high-flown quills that soar the  
skies  
And ever with your prey still catch your  
praise,  
If e're you deign<sup>2</sup> these lowly lines your  
eyes,  
Give thyme or parsley wreath—I ask no bays  
This mean and unrefined ore<sup>3</sup> of mine  
Will make you glist'ring gold, but more to  
shine

1650

#### From CONTEMPLATIONS

WHEN I behold the heavens as in their prime,  
And then the earth (though old) still clad in  
green,  
The stones and trees, insensible to time,  
Nor age nor wrinkle on their front are seen,

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the critics, whose opinion is expressed in the following line    <sup>2</sup> i.e., deign to glance upon these lowly lines    <sup>3</sup> "ure" in text

If winter come, and greenness then do fade,  
A Spring returns, and they more youthful  
made;

But Man grows old, lies down, remains where  
once he's laid

By birth more noble than those creatures all,  
Yet seems by nature and by custom curs'd,  
No sooner born, but grief and care makes  
fall 10

That state obliterate he had at first:  
Nor youth, nor strength, nor wisdom spring  
again

Nor habitations long their names retain,  
But in oblivion to the final day remain.

Shall I then praise the heavens, the trees, the  
earth

Because their beauty and their strength last  
longer?

Shall I wish there, or never to had birth,  
Because they're bigger, and their bodies  
stronger?

Nay, they shall darken, perish, fade and die,  
And when unmade, so ever shall they lie, 20  
But man was made for endless immortality

Under the cooling shadow of a stately elm  
Close sate I by a goodly river's side  
Where gliding streams the rocks did over-  
whelm,

A lonely place, with pleasures dignifi'd  
I once that lov'd the shady woods so well,  
Now thought the rivers did the trees excel,  
And if the sun would ever shine, there would  
I dwell.

While on the stealing stream I fixt mine eye,  
Which to the long'd for Ocean held its course,  
I markt, nor crooks, nor rubs that there did  
lie 31

Could hinder ought, but still augment its  
force:

"O happy flood," quoth I, "that holds thy race  
Till thou arrive at thy beloved place,  
Nor is it rocks or shoals that can obstruct thy  
pace,

Nor is't enough, that thou alone may'st slide,  
But hundred brooks in thy clear waves do  
meet,

So hand in hand along with thee they glide  
To Thetis' house, where all embrace and greet.

Thou Emblem true, of what I count the best,  
 O could I lead my rivulets to rest, 41  
 So may we press to that vast mansion, ever  
 blest." 1678

### LONGING FOR HEAVEN

1

As weary pilgrim, now at rest,  
 Hugs with delight his silent nest—  
 His wasted limbs now lie full soft  
 That mury steps have trodden oft—  
 Blesses himself, to think upon  
 His dangers past, and travails done—  
 The burning sun no more shall heat,  
 Nor stormy rains on him shall beat.  
 The briars and thorns no more shall scratch,  
 Nor hungry wolves at him shall catch, 10  
 He erring paths no more shall tread,  
 Nor wild fruits eat, in stead of bread,  
 For waters cold he doth not long,  
 For thirst no more shall parch his tongue;  
 No rugged stones his feet shall gall,  
 Nor stumps nor rocks cause him to fall,  
 All cares and fears, he bids farewell  
 And means in safety now to dwell

2

A pilgrim I, on earth, perplex  
 With suns, with cares and sorrows vex, 20  
 By age and pains brought to decay  
 And my clay house mould'ring away—  
 Oh, how I long to be at rest  
 And soar on hugh among the blest  
 This body shall in silence sleep;  
 Mine eyes no more shall ever weep,  
 No fainting fits shall me assail  
 Nor grinding pains, my body frail

With cares and fears ne'er cumb' red be,  
 Nor losses know, nor sorrows see. 30  
 What though my flesh shall there consume?  
 It is the bed Christ did perfume;  
 And when a few years shall be gone,  
 This mortal shall be cloth'd upon.  
 A corrupt carcass down it lies;  
 A glorious body it shall rise.  
 In weakness and dishonor sown,  
 In power 'tis rais'd by Christ alone.  
 Then soul and body shall unite  
 And of their maker have the sight; 40  
 Such lasting joys shall there behold  
 As ear ne'er heard nor tongue e'er told.  
 Lord make me ready for that day—  
 Then come, dear bridegroom, come away.

1689

1867

### TO MY DEAR AND LOVING HUSBAND

If ever two were one, then surely we  
 If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee;  
 If ever wife was happy in a man,  
 Compare with me, ye women, if you can  
 I prize thy love more than whole mines of  
 gold,  
 Or all the riches that the East doth hold  
 My love is such that rivers cannot quench,  
 Nor ought but love from thee give recom-  
 pense  
 Thy love is such I can no way repay;  
 The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray. 10  
 Then while we live, in love let's so persevere,  
 That when we live no more, we may live  
 ever.

1678

c. 1612 ~ *Daniel Gookin* ~ 1687

DANIEL GOOKIN, protector of the Indians in New England, was born in Kent but came as a boy with his father to Virginia. There both father and son held grants of land. He went back to England, serving with the Puritan army in the Civil War, then returned to Virginia but left on account of the rising anti-Puritan feeling there. In 1644 he settled in Cambridge and soon became a prominent leader in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, serving as speaker of the house of deputies and member

of the Council. Appointed in 1656 superintendent of all Indians under civil authority, he fulfilled his duties with such devotion that he incurred suspicion and antagonism during the crucial months of King Philip's War. His resolute advocacy of the colonial cause in the controversy regarding the charter won back the good opinion of the citizenry, and after 1681 he was major general of the colony. Late in life he devoted much time to historical writing, particularly about the Indians of New England. He was associated with John Eliot, apostle to the Indians and translator of the Bible into the Algonquin language, and helped him in his missionary labors.

Gookin's *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England* was first published in the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections in 1792. *An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England* was printed by the American Antiquarian Society in 1836, II, 423-534. Both works had been fully prepared for publication by the author. His *History of New England*, also left in manuscript, is supposed to have been destroyed when his son's home was burned.

From HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS  
OF THE INDIANS IN NEW  
ENGLAND

[Theories Regarding the Origin  
of the Indians]

ANOTHER apprehension <sup>1</sup> is, that the original of these Americans is from the Tartars, or Scythians, that live in the north-east parts of Asia, which some good geographers conceive is nearly joined unto the north-west parts of America, and possibly are one continent, or at least separated but by some narrow gulf, and from this beginning have spread themselves into the several parts of the North and South America, and because the southern parts were more fertile, and free from the cold winters incident to the northern regions, hence the southern parts became first planted, and most populous and rich. This opinion gained more credit than the former, because the people of America are not altogether unlike in color, shape, and manners unto the Scythian people, and in regard that such a land travel is more feasible and probable than a voyage by sea so great a distance, as is before expressed, from other inhabited places, either in Europe, Asia, or Africa; especially so long since, when we

hear of no sailing out of sight of land, before the use of the lodestone and compass was found. But if this people be sprung from the Tartarian or Scythian people, as this notion asserts, then it is to me a question, why they did not attend the known practice of that people; who in all their removes and plantations, take with them their kine, sheep, horses, and camels, and the like tame beasts; which that people keep in great numbers, and drive with them in all their removes. But of these sorts and kinds of beasts used by the Tartars, none were found in America among the Indians. This question or objection is answered by some thus. First, possibly the first people were banished for some notorious offenses, and so not permitted to take with them of these tame beasts. Or, secondly, possibly, the gulf, or passage, between Asia and America, though narrow, comparatively, is yet too broad to waft over any of those sort of creatures, and yet possibly men and women might pass over it in canoes made of hollow trees, or with barks of trees, wherein, it is known, the Indians will transport themselves, wives and children, over lakes and gulfs, very considerable for breadth. I have known some to pass with like vessels forty miles across an arm of the sea.

But before I pass to another thing, suppose it should be so, that the origination of the Americans came from Asia, by the north-west

<sup>1</sup> The first "apprehension" is that they descend from the ten lost tribes of Israel, transported by some means to America.



of America, where the continents are conceived to meet very near, which indeed is an opinion very probable; yet this doth not hinder the truth of the first conjecture, that this people may be of the race of the ten tribes of Israel for the king of Assyria who led them captive, as we heard before, transported them into Asia, and placed them in several provinces and cities, as in II Kings, xvii, 6 Now possibly, in process of time, this people, or at least some considerable number of them, whose custom and manner it was to keep themselves distinct from the other nations they lived amongst, and did commonly intermarry only with their own people, and also their religion being so different from the heathen, unto whom they were generally an abomination, as they were to the Egyptians; and also partly from God's judgment following them for their sins: I say, it is not impossible but a considerable number of them might withdraw themselves, and so pass gradually into the extreme parts of the continent of Asia; and wherever they came being disrelished by the heathen, might for their own security pass further and further, till they found America; which being unpeopled, there they found some rest, and so, in many hundred of years spread themselves in America in that thin manner, as they were found there, especially in the northern parts of it, which country is able to contain and accommodate millions of mankind more than were found in it And for their speech, which is not only different among themselves, but from the Hebrew, that might easily be lost by their often removes, or God's judgment.

A third conjecture of the original of these Indians is, that some of the tawny Moors of Africa, inhabiting upon the sea coasts, in times of war and contention among themselves, have put off to sea, and been transported over, in such small vessels as those times afforded, unto the south part of America, where the two continents of Africa and America are nearest; and they could not have opportunity or advantage to carry with the small vessels of those times any tame beasts, such as were in that country Some reasons are given for this notion. First, because the Americans are much like the Moors of Africa. Secondly, the seas between the tropics are easy to pass, and

safe for small vessels; the winds in those parts blowing from the east to the west, and the current setting the same course. Thirdly, because it is most probable that the inhabitants of America first came into the south parts; where were found the greatest numbers of people, and the most considerable cities and riches.

But these, or any other notions, can amount to no more than rational conjecture, for a certainty of their first extraction cannot be attained; for they being ignorant of letters and records of antiquity, as the Europeans, Africans, and sundry of the Asians are and have been, hence any true knowledge of their ancestors is utterly lost among them I have discoursed and questioned about this matter with some of the most judicious of the Indians, but their answers are divers and fabulous Some of the inland Indians say that they came from such as inhabit the seacoasts Others say, that there were two young squaws, or women, being at first either swimming or wading in the water, the froth or foam of the water touched their bodies, from whence they became with child; and one of them brought forth a male, and the other a female child, and then the two women died and left the earth So their son and daughter were their first progenitors. Other fables and figments are among them touching this thing, which are not worthy to be inserted These only may suffice to give a taste of their great ignorance touching their original; the full determination whereof must be left until the day wherein all secret and hidden things shall be manifested to the glory of God.

But this may upon sure grounds be asserted, that they are Adam's posterity, and consequently children of wrath, and hence are not only objects of all Christians' pity and compassion, but subjects upon which our faith, prayers and best endeavours should be put forth to reduce them from barbarism to civility; but especially to rescue them out of the bondage of Satan, and bring them to salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the main scope and design of this tractate.

[*Indian Youths at Harvard*]

There was much cost out of the Corporation stock expended in this work, for fitting and preparing the Indian youth to be learned and able preachers unto their countrymen. Their diet, apparel, books, and schooling, was chargeable.<sup>1</sup> In truth the design was prudent, noble, and good, but it proved ineffectual to the ends proposed. For several of the said youth died, after they had been sundry years at learning and made good proficiency therein. Others were disheartened and left learning, after they were almost ready for the college. And some returned to live among their countrymen, where some of them are improved<sup>2</sup> for schoolmasters and teachers, unto which they are advantaged by their education. Some others of them have entered upon other callings: as one is a mariner; another, a carpenter, another went for England with a gentleman that lived sometimes at Cambridge in New England, named Mr. Drake, which Indian, as I heard, died there not many months after his arrival.

I remember but only two of them all that lived in the college at Cambridge: the one named Joel, the other, Caleb, both natives of Martha's Vineyard. These two hopeful young men, especially Joel, being so ripe in learning, that he should, within a few months, have taken his first degree of bachelor of art in the college. He took a voyage to Martha's Vineyard to visit his father and kindred, a little before the commencement, but upon his return back in a vessel, with other passengers and mariners, suffered shipwreck upon the island of Nantucket; where the bark was found put on shore; and in all probability the people in it came on shore alive, but afterwards were murdered by some wicked Indians of that place, who, for lucre of the spoil in the vessel, which was laden with goods, thus cruelly destroyed the people in it, for which fault some of those Indians were convicted and executed afterwards. Thus perished our hopeful young prophet Joel. He was a good scholar and a pious man, as I judge. I knew him well, for he lived and was taught in the same town where I dwell. I observed him for several

years, after he was grown to years of discretion, to be not only a diligent student, but an attentive hearer of God's word; diligently writing the sermons and frequenting lectures, grave and sober in his conversation.

The other called Caleb, not long after he took his degree of bachelor of art at Cambridge in New England, died of consumption at Charlestown, where he was placed by Mr. Thomas Danforth, who had inspection over him, under the care of a physician in order to his health, where he wanted not for the best means the country could afford, both of food and physic, but God denied the blessing, and put a period to his days.

Of this disease of the consumption sundry of those Indians youths died, that were bred up to school among the English. The truth is, this disease is frequent among the Indians; and sundry die of it, that live not with the English. A hectic fever, issuing in a consumption, is a common and mortal disease among them. I know some have apprehended other causes of the mortality of these Indian scholars. Some have attributed it unto the great change upon their bodies, in respect to their diet, lodging, apparel, studies, so much different from what they were inured to among their own countrymen.

These awful providences of God, in frustrating the hopeful expectations concerning the learned Indian youth, who were designed to be for teachers unto their countrymen, concurring with some other severe dispensations of God obstructive to this work—some whereof may be hereafter mentioned—caused great thoughts of heart unto the well-willers and promoters thereof. Some conceived, God was not pleased yet to make use of any of the Indians to preach the Gospel; and that the time of the great harvest of their ingathering is not yet come, but will follow after the calling of the Jews. Others thought that this honor of their instruction and conversion shall be continued with Englishmen. Others were of opinion that Satan, the great enemy and opposer of men's salvation, who had for many years held these poor barbarians under his dominion, did use all his stratagems and endeavors to impede the spreading of the Christian faith, that he might the better keep

<sup>1</sup> i. e., at the charge of the Corporation of Harvard College    <sup>2</sup> employed

possession of his kingdom among them. But others, whose faith I hope in God was active and vigorous, did conclude that there was nothing more in these providences and remoras,<sup>1</sup> than did usually attend and accompany all good designs tending to the glory of God

<sup>1</sup> obstacles

and salvation of souls; whereof plentiful examples are recorded in Holy Scriptures, especially in the primitive times; which in several chapters of the Acts of Apostles may be demonstrated. . . .

1674

1792

### c. 1635 ~ *Mary Rowlandson* ~ c. 1678

MRS. ROWLANDSON spent most of her life in the frontier village of Lancaster, Massachusetts, as the daughter of a prosperous citizen and the wife of its first minister. On February 19, 1675/6 the Indians invaded the town, killed many of the inhabitants, and carried her and her three children into captivity. For eleven weeks she wandered as their prisoner until she was ransomed for twenty pounds. The two older children were released soon afterward. She survived her harrowing experiences only a few years, dying in Connecticut about 1678.

*The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed, Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* was published in Cambridge in 1682 and has gone through thirty or more editions since then. The account of Mrs. Rowlandson's adventures loses little through the direct, often naïve, style in which she writes. Her own character and the Puritan attitude toward the savages are more clearly shown, however, than the actual nature of the Indians themselves.

Mrs. Rowlandson's account established a vogue for narratives of captivity and sufferings at the hands of the Indians which continued as long as they remained a menace to the white settlements. During a century or more when puritanism frowned upon the reading of fiction, scores of these narratives based upon real experiences were turned out and avidly read throughout New England and elsewhere. In the later eighteenth-century accounts, imagination and borrowed elements begin to creep in, until Mrs. Eliza Bleecker's *History of Maria Kettle* (1793, written c. 1780) is frankly a work of fiction.

The best edition of the *Narrative* (1682) is that of H. S. Nourse and J. E. Thayer, a facsimile of the second edition, with full biography and bibliography, in 1903, and reprinted without bibliography in 1930. The *DAB* article is by Lewis Hanke. See also J. Nelson, "Mary Rowlandson's Narrative," *Americana*, XXVII, 45-62 (January, 1933); and H. S. Nourse, "Mrs Mary Rowlandson's Removes," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, N.S. XII (1899), 401-409.

From A NARRATIVE OF THE  
CAPTIVITY<sup>1</sup>

[*The Beginning of the Captivity*]

ON the tenth of February, 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster. Their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. There were five persons taken in one house, the father and the mother and a sucking child they knockt on the head; the other two they took and carried away alive. Their were two others, who, being out of their garrison upon some occasion, were set upon, one was knockt on the head, the other escaped. Another there was who, running along, was shot and wounded and fell down, he begged of them his life, promising them money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him but knockt him in [the] head, and stript him naked, and split open his bowels. Another seeing many of the Indians about his barn, ventured and went out, but was quickly shot down. There were three others belonging to the same garrison who were killed; the Indians getting up upon the roof of the barn, had advantage to shoot down upon them over their fortification. Thus these murderous wretches went on, burning and destroying before them.

At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefullest day that ever mine eyes saw. The house stood upon the edge of a hill; some of the Indians got behind the hill, others into the barn, and others behind any thing that could shelter them, from all which places they shot against the house, so that the bullets seemed to fly like hail, and quickly they wounded one man among us, then another, and then a third. About two hours (according to my observation, in that amazing time) they had been about the house before they prevailed to fire it (which they did with flax and hemp, which they brought out of the barn, and there being no defence about the house, only two flankers at two opposite corners and

one of them not finished) they fired it once and one ventured out and quenched it, but they quickly fired it again, and that took. Now is the dreadful hour come, that I have often heard of (in time of war, as it was the case of others) but now mine eyes see it. Some in our house were fighting for their lives, others wallowing in their blood, the house on fire over our heads, and the bloody heathen ready to knock us on the head, if we sturred out. Now might we hear mothers & children crying for themselves and one another, *Lord, what shall we do?* Then I took my children (and one of my sisters, hers) to go forth and leave the house: but as soon as we came to the door and appeared, the Indians shot so thick that the bullets rattled against the house, as if one had taken an handful of stones and threw them, so that we were fain to give back. We had six stout dogs belonging to our garrison, but none of them would stir, though another time, if any Indian had come to the door, they were ready to fly upon him and tear him down. The Lord hereby would make us the more to acknowledge his hand, and to see that our help is alwayes in him. But out we must go, the fire increasing, and coming along behind us, roaring, and the Indians gaping before us with their guns, spears, and hatchets, to devour us. No sooner were we out of the house, but my brother in law (being before wounded, in defending the house, in or near the throat) fell down dead, whereto the Indians scornfully shouted, and hallowed, and were presently upon him, stripping off his cloaths; the bullets flying thick, one went through my side, and the same (as would seem) through the bowels and hand of my dear child in my arms. One of my elder sister's children, named William, had then his leg broken, which the Indians perceiving, they knockt him on [the] head. Thus were we butchered by those merciless Heathen, standing amazed, with the blood running down to our heels. My eldest sister being yet in the house, and seeing these wofull sights, the Infidels haling mothers one way, and children another, and some wallowing in their blood and her elder son telling her that her son William was dead, and my self was wounded, she said, *And, Lord, let me dy with them*, which was no sooner said, but she was

<sup>1</sup> The spelling of Mrs Rowlandson's narrative has been retained here.

struck with a bullet, and fell down dead over the threshold. I hope she is reaping the fruit of her labours, being faithful to the service of God in her place. In her younger years she lay under much trouble upon spiritual accounts, till it pleased God to make that precious Scripture take hold of her heart, 2 Cor. 12, 9. *And he said unto me, my Grace is sufficient for thee.* More then twenty years after I have heard her tell how sweet and comfortable that place was to her. But to return: The Indians laid hold of me, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, *Come, go along with us,* I told them they would kill me: they answered, *If I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me.*

Oh, the dolefull sight that now was to behold at this house! *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what dissolutions he has made in the Earth.* Of thirty seven persons who were in this one house, none escaped either present death or a bitter captivity, save only one, who might say as he Job, 1, 15. *And I only am escaped alone to tell the news.* There were twelve killed, some shot, some stab'd with their spears, some knock'd down with their hatchets. When we are in prosperity, oh the little that we think of such dreadful sights, and to see our dear friends, and relations ly bleeding out their heart-blood upon the ground. There was one who was chopt into the head with a hatchet, and stript naked, and yet was crawling up and down. It is a solemn sight to see so many Christians lying in their blood, some here, and some there, like a company of sheep torn by wolves. All of them stript naked by a company of hell-hounds, roaring, singing, ranting, and insulting, as if they would have torn our very hearts out; yet the Lord by his Almighty power preserved a number of us from death, for there were twenty-four of us taken alive and carried captive.

I had often before thus said, that if the Indians should come, I should chuse rather to be killed by them then taken alive, but when it came to the tryal my mind changed, their glittering weapons so daunted my spirit, that I chose rather to go along with those (as I may say) ravenous bears, then that moment to end my dayes; and that I may the better declare what happened to me during that griev-

ous captivity, I shall particularly speak of the severall removes we had up and down the wilderness.

### *The First Remove*

Now away we must go with those barbarous creatures, with our bodies wounded and bleeding, and our hearts no less than our bodies. About a mile we went that night, up upon a hill within sight of the town where they intended to lodge. There was hard by a vacant house (deserted by the English before, for fear of the Indians). I asked them whether I might not lodge in the house that night, to which they answered, *What, will you love English men still?* This was the dolefullest night that ever my eyes saw. Oh the roaring, and singing and dancing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night, which made the place a lively resemblance of hell. And as miserable was the wast that was there made, of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, calves, lambs, roasting pigs, and fowl (which they had plundered in the town), some roasting, some lying and burning, and some boyling to feed our merciless enemies, who were joyful enough though we were disconsolate. To add to the dolefulness of the former day, and the dismalness of the present night, my thoughts ran upon my losses and sad bereaved condition. All was gone, my husband gone (at least separated from me, he being in the Bay, and to add to my grief, the Indians told me they would kill him as he came homeward) my children gone, my relations and friends gone, our house and home and all our comforts, within door and without, all was gone, (except my life) and I knew not but the next moment that might go too. There remained nothing to me but one poor wounded babe, and it seemed at present worse than death that it was in such a pitiful condition, bespeaking compassion, and I had no refreshing for it, nor suitable things to revive it. Little do many think what is the savageness and brutishness of this barbarous enemy; even those that seem to profess more than others among them, when the English have fallen into their hands.

Those seven that were killed at Lancaster

the summer before upon a Sabbath day, and the one that was afterward killed upon a week day, were slain and mangled in a barbarous manner, by one-ey'd John, and Marlborough's Praying Indians, which Capt. Mosely brought to Boston, as the Indians told me.

### *The Second Remove*

But now, the next morning, I must turn my back upon the town, and travel with them into the vast and desolate wilderness, I knew not whither. It is not my tongue or pen can express the sorrows of my heart, and bitterness of my spirit, that I had at this departure: but God was with me in a wonderfull manner, carrying me along, and bearing up my spirit that it did not quite fail. One of the Indians carried my poor wounded babe upon a horse, it went moaning all along, *I shall dy, I shall dy* 20 I went on foot after it, with sorrow that cannot be express. At length I took it off the horse, and carried it in my armes till my strength failed, and I fell down with it. then they set me upon a horse with my wounded child in my lap, and there being no furniture upon the horse back, as we were going down a steep hill, we both fell over the horses head, at which they like inhumane creatures laught, and rejoiced to see it, though I thought we should 30 have ended our dayes, as overcome with so many difficulties. But the Lord renewed my strength still, and carried me along, that I might see more of his power; yea, so much that I could never have thought of, had I not experienced it.

After this it quickly began to snow, and when night came on, they stopt and now down I must sit in the snow, by a little fire, and a few boughs behind me, with my sick 40 child in my lap; and calling much for water, being now (through the wound) fallen into a violent fever. My own wound also growing so stiff, that I could scarce sit down or rise up, yet so it must be, that I must sit all this cold winter night upon the cold snowy ground, with my sick child in my armes, looking that every hour would be the last of its life, and having no Christian friend near me, either to comfort or help me. Oh, I may see the wonder- 50 full power of God, that my spirit did not

utterly sunk under my affliction: still the Lord upheld me with his gracious and mercifull spirit, and we were both alive to see the light of the next morning.

### *The Third Remove*

The morning being come, they prepared to go on their way. One of the Indians got up upon a horse, and they set me up behind him, with my poor sick babe in my lap. A very wearisome and tedious day I had of it, what with my own wound, and my child being so exceeding sick, and in a lamentable conditio with her wound. It may be easily judged what a poor feeble conditio we were in, there being not the least crumb of refreshing that came within either of our mouths, from Wednesday night to Saturday night, except only a little cold water. This day in the afternoon, about an hour by sun, we came to the place where they intended, viz an Indian town, called Wenimesset, norward of Quabeug. When we were come, Oh the number of pagans (now merciless enemies) that there came about me, that I may say as David, *Psal 27 13, I had faunted unless I had believed &c* The next day was the Sabbath. I then remembered how careless I had been of Gods holy time, how many 30 Sabbaths I had lost and mispent, and how evilly I had walked in Gods sight, which lay so closs unto my spirit, that it was easie for me to see how righteous it was with God to cut off the threed of my life, and cast me out of his presence forever. Yet the Lord still shewed mercy to me, and upheld me, and as he wounded me with one hand, so he healed me with the other. This day there came to me one Robbert Pepper (a man belonging to Roxbury) who was taken in Captain Beers his fight, and had been now a considerable time with the Indians; and up with them almost as far as Albany to see king Philip, as he told me, and was now very lately come into these parts. Hearing, I say, that I was in this Indian town, he obtained leave to come and see me. He told me, he himself was wounded in the leg at Captain Beers his fight, and was not able some time to go, but as they carried him, and as he took oaken leaves and lain to his wound, and through the blessing of

God he was able to travel again. Then I took oaken leaves and laid to my side, and with the blessing of God it cured me also; yet before the cure was wrought, I may say, as it is in *Psal* 38, 1, 6. *My wounds stunk and are corrupt, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long* I sat much alone with a poor wounded child in my lap, which moaned night and day, having nothing to revive the body, or cheer the spirits of her, but in stead of that, sometimes one Indian would come and tell me one hour, that your master will knock your child in the head, and then a second, and then a third, your master will quickly knock your child in the head.

This was the comfort I had from them, *Miserable comforters are ye all*, as he<sup>1</sup> said. Thus nine dayes I sat upon my knees, with my babe in my lap, till my flesh was raw again, my child being even ready to depart this sorrowfull world, they bade me carry it out to another wigwam (I suppose because they would not be troubled with such spectacles), whither I went with a very heavy heart, and down I sat with the picture of death in my lap. About two houres in the night, my sweet babe, like a lamb departed this life, on Feb 18, 1675. It being about six years, and five months old. It was nine dayes from the first wounding, in this miserable condition, without any refreshing of one nature or other, except a little cold water I cannot but take notice, how at another time I could not bear to be in the room where any dead person was, but now the case is changed, I must and could ly down by my dead babe, side by side all the night after I have thought since of the wonderfull goodness of God to me, in preserving me in the use of my reason and senses, in that distressed time, that I did not use wicked and violent means to end my own miserable life. In the morning, when they understood that my child was dead they sent for me home to my masters wigwam (by my master in this writing, must be understood Quanopin, who was a Saggamore, and married King Phillips wives sister; not that he first took me, but I was sold to him by another Narrhaganset Indian, who took me when first I came out of the garison); I went to take up my dead child in my arms to carry it

with me, but they bid me let it alone: there was no resisting, but goe I must and leave it. When I had been at my masters wigwam, I took the first opportunity I could get, to go look after my dead child: when I came I askt them what they had done with it: Then they told me it was upon the hill and they went and shewed me where it was, where I saw the ground was newly digged, and there they told me they had buried it: There I left that child in the wilderness, and must commit it, and my self also in this wilderness-condition, to him who is above all God having taken away this dear child, I went to see my daughter Mary, who was at this same Indian town, at a wigwam not very far off, though we had little liberty or opportunity to see one another. She was about ten years old, &c taken from the door at first by a Praying Ind &c afterward sold for a gun. When I came in sight, she would fall a weeping, at which they were provoked, and would not let me come near her, but bade me be gone, which was a heart-cutting word to me I had one child dead, another in the wilderness, I knew not where, the third they would not let me come near to: *Me* (as he<sup>1</sup> said) *have ye bereaved of my children, Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin also, all these things are against me*. I could not sit still in this condition, but kept walking from one place to another. And as I was going along, my heart was even overwhelm'd with the thoughts of my condition, and that I should have children, and a Nation which I knew not ruled over them. Whereupon I earnestly entreated the Lord, that he would consider my low estate, and shew me a token for good, and if it were his blessed will, some sign and hope of some relief And indeed quickly the Lord answered, in some measure, my poor prayers. for as I was going up and down mourning and lamenting my condition, my son came to me, and asked me how I did, I had not seen him before, since the destruction of the town, and I knew not where he was, till I was informed by himself, that he was amongst a smaller parcel of Indians, whose place was about six miles off, with tears in his eyes, he asked me whether his sister Sarah was dead; and told me

<sup>1</sup> See Job 16 2<sup>1</sup> Jacob See Genesis 42 36

he had seen his sister Mary; and prayed me, that I would not be troubled in reference to himself. The occasion of his coming to see me at this time, was this. There was, as I said, about six miles of us, a small plantation of Indians, where it seems he had been during his captivity. and at this time, there were some forces of the Ind. gathered out of our company, and some also from them (among whom was my sons master) to go to assault and burn 10 Medfield. In this time of the absence of his master, his dame brought him to see me. I took this to be some gracious answer to my earnest and unfeigned desire. The next day, viz. to this, the Indians returned from Medfield, all the company, for those that belonged to the other small company, came through the town that now we were at. But before they came to us, Oh! the outrageous roaring and 20 hooping that there was. They began their din about a mile before they came to us. By their noise and hooping they signified how many they had destroyed (which was at that time twenty three) Those that were with us at home, were gathered together as soon as they heard the hooping, and every time that the other went over their number, these at home gave a shout, that the very Earth rung again. And thus they continued till those that had been upon the expedition were come up to 30 the Sagamores wigwam, and then, Oh, the hideous insulting and triumphing that there was over some Englishmens scalps that they had taken (as their manner is) and brought with them. I cannot but take notice of the wonderful mercy of God to me in those afflictions, in sending me a Bible. One of the Indians that came from Medfield fight, had brought some plunder, came to me, and asked me, if I would have a Bible, he had got one in his basket; I was glad of it, and asked him, whether 40 he thought the Indians would let me read? He answered, *Yes*, so I took the Bible, and in that

melancholy time, it came into my mind to read first the 28 Chap. of *Deut.*, which I did, and when I had read it, my dark heart wrought on this manner, *That there was no mercy for me, that the blessings were gone, and the curses came in their room, and that I had lost my opportunity.* But the Lord helped me still to go on reading till I came to Chap. 30, the seven first verses, where I found, *There was 10 mercy promised again, if we would return to him by repentance, and though we were scatered from one end of the Earth to the other, yet the Lord would gather us together, and turn all those curses upon our enemies.* I do not desire to live to forget this Scripture, and what comfort it was to me.

Now the Ind. began to talk of removing from this place, some one way, and some another. There were now besides my self nine 20 English captives in this place (all of them children, except one woman). I got an opportunity to go and take my leave of them, they being to go one way, and I another, I asked them whether they were earnest with God for deliverance, they told me, they did as they were able, and it was some comfort to me, that the Lord stirred up children to look to him. The woman viz. Goodwife Jostin, told me, she should never see me again, and that she could find in her heart to run away, I wisht her not to run away by any means, for we were near 30 thirty miles from any English town, and she very big with child, and had but one week to reckon, and another child in her arms, two years old, and bad rivers there were to go over, & we were feeble with our poor & coarse entertainment. I had my Bible with me, I pulled it out, and asked her whether she would read, we opened the Bible and lighted on *Psal* 27 in which Psalm we especially took notice of that ver. xiv, *Wait on the Lord be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart wait, I say, on the Lord.*



## 1642 ~ Benjamin Thompson ~ 1714

THE FIRST native-born poet of America, according to his biographer, was the son of William Thompson, an Oxford graduate and minister in Braintree (now Quincy), Massachusetts. During the father's absence on a fruitless missionary visit to Virginia, the mother died, and the six-months-old boy was cared for by kindly neighbors, who, removing to Charlestown, brought him up there. He was graduated from Harvard in 1662, but instead of entering the ministry, he became a school-master. He taught for a time in the Boston Latin School and later in Charlestown and Roxbury, but during most of his life in his native town of Braintree.

Tompson's most ambitious work, called forth by the dangers and destruction of King Philip's War, was *New England's Crisis* (1676), the first book of American poems published within the present United States. A second volume, *New England's Tears*, largely the same in content, appeared in London later in the same year. Most of his remaining poems were brief elegies on his contemporaries. At his best Tompson was an accurate workman in verse, following Quarles, a poet popular in New England, and perhaps, as Tyler conjectures, also using Dryden's early couplet as a model, but jest and seriousness are often too incongruously mixed in his poems. At his worst, he was very bad, especially when asked to compose on short notice, as in the conclusion of one of his first poems on the death of Rebekah Sewall:

Pleasant Rebeckah, here's to thee a tear.  
Hug my sweet Mary if you chance to see her.  
Had you given warning ere you pleased to die,  
You might have had a neater elegy.

Tompson's surviving works, including his two volumes, *New England's Crisis* (1676) and *New England's Tears* (1676), have been excellently edited, with a biographical introduction, by Howard Judson Hall (1924).

## From NEW ENGLAND'S CRISIS

*The Prologue*

THE times wherein old Pompion <sup>1</sup> was a saint,  
When men fared hardly, yet without complaint,

On vilest cates,<sup>2</sup> the dainty Indian maize  
Was eat with clam-shells, out of wooden trays,  
Under thatched huts, without the cry of rent,  
And the best sauce to every dish, content

<sup>1</sup> pumpkin      <sup>2</sup> on coarsest cakes

When flesh was food, and hairy skins made coats,

And men as well as birds had chirping notes,  
When cinnels <sup>1</sup> were accounted noble blood  
Among the tribes of common herbage food, to  
Of Ceres' bounty formed was many a knack,<sup>2</sup>  
Enough to fill *Poor Robin's Almanac* <sup>3</sup>  
These golden times (too fortunate to hold)  
Were quickly sunned away for love of gold.

<sup>1</sup> cinnels or simlins, a kind of squash      <sup>2</sup> a choice dish.  
a dainty      <sup>3</sup> a British almanac, first issued in 1662

'Twas then, among the bushes, not the street,  
If one in place did an inferior meet,  
"Good morrow, brother. Is there ought you  
want?"

Take freely of me what I have, you ha'n't."  
Plain "Tom" and "Dick" would pass as current  
now

As ever since, "Your servant, sir," and bow. 20  
Deep-skirted doublets, puritanic capes,  
Which now would render men like upright  
apes,

Was comelier wear, our wiser fathers thought,  
Than the cast fashions from all Europe  
brought.

'Twas in those days, an honest grace would  
hold

Till a hot pudding grew at heart a cold,  
And men had better stomachs to religion  
Than I to capon, turkey-cock, or pigeon;  
When honest sisters met to pray, not prate,  
About their own, and not their neighbors',  
state. 30

During Plain Dealing's reign, that worthy stud  
Of th' ancient planters' race before the Flood—  
These times were good, merchants cared not a  
rush

For other fare than jonakin and mush <sup>1</sup>  
Although men fared and lodged very hard,  
Yet innocence was better than a guard  
'Twas long before spiders and worms <sup>2</sup> had  
drawn

Their duncy webs or hid with cheating lawn <sup>3</sup>  
New England's beauties, which still seemed to  
me

Illustrious in their own simplicity. 40

'Twas ere the neighboring Virgin-land <sup>4</sup> had  
broke

The hogsheds of her worse than hellish  
smoke

'Twas ere the Islands <sup>5</sup> sent their presents in,  
Which but to use was counted next to sin

'Twas ere a barge had made so rich a freight  
As chocolate, dust-gold, and bits of eight <sup>6</sup>,  
Ere wines from France, and muscovado <sup>7</sup> too,  
Without the which the drink will scarcely do,  
From western isles; ere fruits and delicacies  
Did rot maids' teeth and spoil their handsome  
faces. 50

<sup>1</sup> Johnnycake and hasty pudding    <sup>2</sup> i.e. silk-  
worms    <sup>3</sup> fine linen    <sup>4</sup> Virginia    <sup>5</sup> the West In-  
dian Islands    <sup>6</sup> Spanish dollars    <sup>7</sup> brown sugar

Or ere these times did chance, the noise of war  
Was from our towns and hearts removed far,  
No bugbear comets in the crystal air  
To drive our Christian planters to despair  
No sooner pagan malice peeped forth  
But valor snibbed <sup>1</sup> it; then were men of worth  
Who by their prayers slew thousands; angel-  
like,

Their weapons are unseen with which they  
strike.

Then had the churches rest, as yet the coals  
Were covered up in most contentious souls. 60  
Freeness in judgment, union in affection,  
Dear love, sound truth—they were our grand  
protection

These were the twins which in our councils  
sate—

These gave prognostics of our future fate.

### [Philip's Speech to His Warriors]

The following harangue, which sums up fairly  
the chief complaints of the Indians against the  
white settlers, is one of the oldest pieces of at-  
tempted dialect writing for artistic purposes, in  
Colonial literature

And here methinks I see this greasy lout  
With all his pagan slaves coil'd round about,  
Assuming all the majesty his throne  
Of rotten stump or of the rugged stone  
Could yield—casting some bacon-rind-like  
looks,

Enough to fright a student from his books—  
Thus treat his Peers, and next to them his  
Commons,

Kennel'd together all, without a summons  
"My friends, our fathers were not half so wise  
As we ourselves, that see with younger eyes 10  
They sell our land to English men, who teach  
Our nation all so fast to pray and preach  
Of all our country they enjoy the best,  
And quickly they intend to have the rest  
This no wunnegin, <sup>2</sup> so big matchit <sup>3</sup> law,  
Which our old fathers' fathers never saw,  
These English make, and we must keep them,  
too,

Which is too hard for them or us to do,  
We drink, we so big whupt; but English, they  
Go sneep <sup>4</sup>—no more—or else a litle pay 20

<sup>1</sup> sharply checked    <sup>2</sup> no wunnegin. no good    <sup>3</sup> big  
matchit very bad    <sup>4</sup> rebuked

Me meddle squaw, me hang'd. Our fathers  
kept  
What squaws they would, whether they waked  
or slept.  
Now, if you'll fight, I'll get you English coats  
And wine to drink, out of their captains'  
throats.  
The richest merchants' houses shall be ours;  
We'll lie no more on mats, or lie in bowers  
We'll have their silken wives, take they our  
squaws,  
They shall be whipt by virtue of our laws.  
If e'er we strike, 'tis now, before they swell  
To greater swarms than we know how to  
quell 30  
This my resolve let neighboring sachems know  
And every one that hath club, gun, or bow"  
Thus was assented to, and for a close,  
He stroked his smutty beard and cursed his  
foes.

1676

## A NEIGHBOR'S TEARS

*Sprinkled on the Dust of the Amiable Virgin*  
*MRS.<sup>1</sup> REBEKAH SEWALL*  
*Who was born December 30, 1704, and died*  
*suddenly, August 3, 1710, Aetatis 6*

The following poem is one of the best examples of the broadside elegy in New England, so called because printed for distribution, on one side of a large unfolded sheet. Its composition was interesting. Little Rebekah Sewall, granddaughter of Judge Samuel Sewall, died at Roxbury while Tompson was teaching there, and the elderly poet-schoolmaster was apparently asked by the father to compose some verses for her. Two labored attempts were produced, from which the printed broadside was later made by piecing together the better lines and images from the two originals, which may be consulted in Tompson's collected poems, pp. 153-159. The suggestion that Judge

<sup>1</sup> "Mistress," i.e., Miss, a title of respect, not then implying the married state

Sewall may have made the final combined version cannot greatly impress those who have read the famous diarist's efforts at versification.

HEAV'NS only, in dark hours, can succor send  
And show a fountain where the cisterns end  
I saw this little one but t'other day  
With a small flock of doves, just in my way  
"What new-made creature's this so bright?"  
thought I,  
"Ahl pity 'tis, such prettiness should die."  
Madam, behold the Lamb of God, for there's  
Your pretty lamb, while you dissolve in tears,  
She lies infolded in her Shepherd's arms 9  
Whose bosom's always full of gracious charms  
Great Jesus claim'd his own; never begrutch  
Your jewels rare into the hands of such  
He, with His righteousness, has better dress'd<sup>1</sup>  
Your babe than e'er you did, when at your  
breast.

'Tis not your case alone, for thousands have  
Follow'd their sweetest comforts to the grave  
Seeking the plat of immortality,  
I saw no place secure, but all must die  
Death, that stern officer, takes no denial;  
I'm grieved he found your door, to make a  
trial 20

Thus, be it on the land or swelling seas,  
His sov'reignty doth what His wisdom please  
Must then the rulers of this world's affairs  
By Providence be brought thus into tears?  
It is a lesson hard, I must confess,  
For our proud wills with Heav'n's to ac-  
quiesce.

But when Death goes before, unseen, behind  
There's such a One as may compose the mind  
Pray, Madam, wipe the tears off your fair eyes,  
With your translated damsel sympathize 30  
Could she from her new school obtain the  
leave,  
She'd tell you things would make you cease to  
grieve.

<sup>1</sup> cared for, cherished

1710

c. 1644 ~ *Edward Taylor* ~ 1729

ONE OF THE MOST interesting colonial poets of the seventeenth century forbade the publication of his works, and remained unknown until 1936. Edward Taylor, a native of Sketchley, in Leicestershire, was educated by a Puritan schoolmaster and became a teacher. After the Restoration, being "a vigorous advocate of Cromwell, civil and religious liberty," he resigned his school rather than take the required oath of conformity and in 1668 migrated to New England. He at once entered Harvard, where he had his lifelong friend, Samuel Sewall, the diarist, as roommate. In college he began writing verse, crude and halting at first, which, before his death in June, 1729, had grown to a manuscript volume of 300 poems. On graduating in 1671, he assumed charge of the church in the frontier town of Westfield, west of the Connecticut River, where, as was not unusual, he served as both minister and physician for over fifty years.

Nearly all of Taylor's poetry is devotional and strongly influenced by the fanciful conceits of the "metaphysical" poets of his youth in England. Its imperfect rhymes and faulty constructions were perhaps the cause of his forbidding any of his heirs to print his writings. Nevertheless the earnestness of his devotion, almost mystical in the series of "Sacramental Meditations," the consistency with which his imagery is developed throughout a poem, and the homely genuineness of his language and figures ("wagon loads of love") compel recognition of him as a real poet. The construction of his poems, their metrical forms, the nature of their metaphors, and their devotion and intimate appeal to the person of Christ show clearly the influence of William Herbert's *The Temple*. Other less likely influences are those of Crashaw, Quarles, and Sir John Davies.

Taylor was described by his grandson, President Ezra Stiles of Yale, as "A man of small stature but firm: of quick Passions—yet serious and grave. . . a Congregationalist in opposition to Presbyterian Church Discipline." Entirely unaffected in his modest efforts to "tweedle praise," he stands apart from other New England poets in his emotional kinship with the English "metaphysicals" and in his conception of Jesus as a loving and merciful intercessor for the souls of men.

Taylor's manuscript "Poetical Works," in the Yale University Library, is being edited for publication, with a biography, by T. H. Johnson. Dr. Johnson's "Edward Taylor: Puritan 'Sacred Poet,'" *New England Quarterly*, X, 290-322 (June, 1937), comments on the significance of his work and includes a number of his poems. Among Taylor's other manuscripts are a "Commentary on the Four Gospels" and a volume of fifteen sermons called "Christographia," a discourse on Christ's person and nature, written in 1701-03. A diary written on his voyage to New England

in 1668 is printed in Massachusetts Historical Society *Proceedings*, XVIII, 4-18 (1880) For further information see Sewall's *Diary, passim*, J. L. Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, II, 397-412 (1873-1881); and W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (1886).

## MEDITATION ONE

WHAT love is this of Thine, that cannot be  
In Thine infinity, O Lord, confin'd,  
Unless it in Thy very person see  
Infinity and finity conjoin'd?  
What? Hath Thy Godhead, as not saused,  
Marr'd our manhood, making it its bride?

Oh, matchless love! filling Heaven to the  
brim!  
O'errunning it, all running o'er beside  
This World! Nay, overflowing Hell, wherein  
For thine Elect there rose a mighty tide! 10  
That there our veins might through Thy  
person bleed,  
To quench those flames that else would on  
us feed

Oh! that my love might overflow my heart,  
To fire the same with love, for love I would  
But oh! my strait'ned breast! my lifeless spark!  
My fireless flame! What chilly love and cold!  
In measure small, in manner chilly, see!  
Lord, blow the coal! Thy love inflame in  
me

1682

## THE EXPERIENCE

Oh! that I always breath'd in such an air  
As I suckt in, feeding on sweet content,  
Disht up unto my soul ev'n in that pray'r  
Pour'd out to God over last Sacrament  
What beam of light wrapt up my sight to  
find  
Me nearer God than e'er came in my mind?

Most strange it was! But yet more strange that  
shone

Which fill'd my soul then to the brim, to spy  
My nature with Thy nature all divine  
Together joined, in Him that's Thou, and I  
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone! There's  
run 11  
Thy Godhead and my manhood in thy Son.

Oh! that that flame which Thou didst on me  
cast

Might me enflame, and lighten everywhere.  
Then Heaven to me would be less at last,  
So much of heaven I should have while here  
Oh! sweet, though short! I'll not forget the  
same  
My nearness, Lord, to Thee did me en-  
flame.

I'll claim my right Give place, ye angels bright!  
Ye further from the Godhead stand than I.  
My nature is your Lord, and doth unite 21  
Better than yours unto the Deity.  
God's throne is first, and mine is next, to you  
Only the place of waiting-men is due

Oh! that my heart Thy golden harp might be,  
Well tun'd by glorious Grace, that ev'ry  
string,

Screw'd to the highest pitch, might unto Thee  
All praises wrapt in sweetest music bring  
I praise Thee, Lord, and better praise Thee  
would

If what I had, my heart might ever hold 30  
1682/3

MEDITATION EIGHT<sup>1</sup>

I, KENNING through astronomy divine  
The World's bright battlement, wherein I  
spy  
A golden path my pencil cannot line  
From that bright Throne unto my threshold  
lie,  
And while my puzzled thoughts about it  
pore,  
I find the Bread of Life in't at my door.

When that this Bird of Paradise, put in  
Thy wicker cage (my corps) to tweedle  
praise,  
Had peckt the fruit forbid, and so did fling  
Away its food, and lost its golden days, 10  
It fell into celestial famine sore,  
And never could attain a morsel more

<sup>1</sup> John vi 52, "I am the living bread"

Alas! alas! poor bird! What wilt thou do?  
This creature's field no food for souls e'er  
gave.

And if thou knock at angels' doors, they show  
An empty barrel; they no soul-bread have  
Alas! poor bird, the World's white loaf is  
done

And cannot yield thee here the smallest  
crumb.

In this sad state, God's tender bowels<sup>1</sup> run  
Out streams of Grace; and he, to end all  
strife,

The purest wheat in Heaven, his dear-dear Son,  
Grinds and kneads up into this Bread of Life,  
Which Bread of Life from Heaven down  
came and stands

Disht on thy table up by angels' hands

Did God mould up this Bread in Heaven, and  
bake,

Which from his table came, and to thine  
goeth?

Doth he bespeak thee thus? "This soul bread  
take,

Come, eat thy fill of this, thy God's white  
loaf?

It's food too fine for angels, yet come, take  
And eat thy fill It's Heaven's sugar cake "

What grace is this, knead in this loaf? This  
thing,

Souls are but petty things it to admire

Ye angels, help! This fill would to the brim  
Heav'n's whelm'd-down crystal meal-  
bowl, yea and higher

This Bread of Life, dropt in my mouth, doth  
cry,

'Eat, eat me, soul, and thou shalt never die.'  
1684

### HOUSEWIFERY

MAKE me, O Lord, thy spinning wheel com-  
plete.

Thy Holy Word my distaff make for me  
Make mine affections thy swift fliers neat,  
And make my soul thy holy spool to be  
My conversation make to be thy reel,  
And reel the yarn thereon, spun off thy  
wheel.

<sup>1</sup> The bowels, according to the older physiology, were  
the seat of compassion

Make me thy loom then; knit therein this  
twine,

And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, wind  
quills

Then weave the web Thyself. The yarn is fine  
Thine ordinances make my fulling mills 10  
Then dye the same in heavenly colors choice,  
All pinkt with varnisht flowers of Paradise

Then clothe therewith mine understanding,  
will,

Affections, judgment, conscience, memory,  
My words and actions, that their shine may  
fill

My ways with glory and Thee glorify.

Then mine apparel shall display before ye  
That I am clothed in holy robes for glory.

c 1685

### THE SOUL'S ADMIRATION HEREUPON

WHAT! I such praises sing! How can it be?

Shall I in Heaven sing?

What! I, that scarce durst hope to see,  
Lord, such a thing?

Though nothing is too hard for Thee,  
One hope hereof seems hard to me

What, can I ever tune those melodies

Who have no tune at all,

Not knowing where to stop nor rise,  
Nor when to fall? 10

To sing Thy praise I am unfit;

I have not learn'd my gamut yet

But should these praises on string'd instru-  
ments

Be sweetly tun'd? I find

I nonplust am; for no conceits<sup>1</sup>

I ever mind

My tongue is neither quill nor bow,  
Nor can my fingers quavers show.

But was it otherwise, I have no kit,<sup>2</sup>

Which though I had, I could 20

Not tune the strings, which soon would slip,  
Though others should.

But should they not, I cannot play,

But for an F should strike an A.

<sup>1</sup> harmony

<sup>2</sup> a small violin

And should Thy praise upon wind instruments  
 Sound all o'er Heaven shrill,  
 My breath will hardly through such vents  
 A whistle fill.

Which though it should, it's past my spell  
 By stops and falls to sound it well 30

How should I, then, join in such exercise?

One sight of Thee'll enuce  
 Mine eyes to heft,<sup>1</sup> whose ecstasies  
 Will stob<sup>2</sup> my voice.

<sup>1</sup> raise

<sup>2</sup> check, block

Hereby mine eyes will bind my tongue  
 Unless Thou, Lord, do cut the thong.

What use of useless me, then, there, poor  
 snake?

There saints and angels sing  
 Thy praise in full career, which make  
 The Heavens to ring. 40  
 Yet if Thou wilt, Thou canst me raise  
 With angels bright to sing Thy praise.

1685

## 1639 ~ Increase Mather ~ 1723

THE FOREMOST American Puritan," as Professor Murdock, his biographer, calls Increase Mather, was the most influential in a distinguished family which dominated ecclesiastical and often political life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. His father, the Reverend Richard Mather, though prominent in the colony, produced relatively little literature and is remembered mainly for his share in the literally and metrically exact but poetically abominable Bay version of the Psalms (1640).

I to the hills lift up mine eyes,  
 from whence shall come mine aid;  
 Mine help doth from Jehovah come,  
 which heaven and earth hath made.

Increase Mather's wife, Maria, was daughter of the learned and famous Dr. John Cotton; a son was Cotton Mather, who was to carry on and increase the prestige of the family; and his grandsons, Samuel Mather and Mather Byles, were prominent clergymen in the eighteenth century. On graduating at Harvard, he went to Great Britain, taking his Master's degree at Trinity College, Dublin, and occupying several pastorates in England, where his brilliancy and erudition in many branches were recognized. The suppression of Puritanism in the Church after the Restoration, however, sent him back to the smaller field of New England, where he was pastor of the Second Church in Boston from 1664 to his death and President of Harvard from 1685 to 1701. He was a preacher of great power, author of many books, mainly on theology and history, and a strong though unpopular influence in politics. He was a leader in scientific thought and investigation, advocating the use of inoculation for smallpox and cautioning against accepting inadequate evidence for conviction in trials for witchcraft. In religion, Professor Murdock says, "He leaned away from the democracy of the original Independents [Congregation-

alists] to a somewhat Presbyterianized ecclesiastical system, and always seems to have preferred an oligarchy dominated by the most learned and devout, yet in civil affairs he argued for the preservation of democratic institutions." When the Colony's charter was withdrawn, Mather was sent to England to endeavor to renew it. He succeeded only partly, saving most of the powers of the representative assembly but losing an elected governor and exclusive franchise for members of the New England Church. Popular dissatisfaction regarding the charter, and increasing religious liberalism lessened his influence, and in 1701 he was forced out of the strategic presidency of Harvard by a new enactment, requiring the president to live in Cambridge. Between continuing to serve God in his church and man in the College, there was only one choice for a Mather.

His works were esteemed for their learning and authority, rather than their style. He is unfortunately remembered chiefly for his *Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (1684) and *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits* (1693), in which his sound judgment is overlaid with the credulity of his time, rather than by his histories of the Indian wars and his defences of the political rights of New England.

Among the most important of Increase Mather's books are *A Brief History of the War with the Indians* (1676), *A Relation of the Troubles Which Have Happened in New England by Reason of the Indians There* (1677), *Life and Death of that Reverend Man of God, Mr. Richard Mather* (1670); *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (1684), and *The Great Blessing of Primitive Counsellors* (1693). The definitive biography, by Kenneth B. Murdock, *Increase Mather, the Foremost American Puritan* (1925), has a full list of sources. Murdock is also author of the excellent article with very full bibliography in the *DAB*. T. J. Holmes published *Increase Mather, a Bibliography of His Works* (2 vols., 1931), with an introduction by G. P. Winship and supplementary material by K. B. Murdock and G. F. Dow. Parts of Mather's *Diary* for the years 1674-1687 are printed in the Massachusetts Historical Society *Proceedings*, 2nd series, XIII, 339-374 and 397-411 (1900). Cotton Mather's *Parentator* (1724), a biography of his father, was reissued in an abridged edition by Samuel Mather in 1725. The best brief sketches are by J. L. Sibley in *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, I (1873), and Williston Walker in *Ten New England Leaders* (1901).

#### From CASES OF CONSCIENCE

In view of the outcome and criticisms of the witchcraft trials in Essex County, in Massachusetts Bay, in 1692, Increase Mather felt called upon to set down an authoritative set of rules and warnings as to procedure in such trials for the future. Though he unquestionably shared the belief of his time in witchcraft, and in a postscript defended the judges at Salem, if his precepts here given had been followed, few if any of the persons accused would have been convicted.

[1] . . . I COULD mention dismal instances of innocent blood which has been shed by means

of the lies of some confessing witches. There is a very sad story mentioned in the preface to the relation of the witchcrafts in Swedeland, how that in the year 1676, at Stockholm, a young woman accused her own mother (who had indeed been a very bad woman, but not guilty of witchcraft) and swore that she had carried her to the nocturnal meetings of witches, upon which the mother was burnt to death. Soon after, the daughter came crying and howling before the judges in open court, declaring that to be revenged on her mother for an offense received, she had falsely ac-



condemned her with a crime which she was not guilty of, for which she also was justly executed. A most wicked man in France freely confessed himself to be a magician, and accused many others, whose lives were thereupon taken from them, and a whole province had like to have been ruined thereby, but the impostor was discovered. The confessing pretended wizard was burnt at Paris in the year 1668. I shall only take notice further of an awful example mentioned by A. B. Spotswood in his *History of Scotland*, p. 449. His words are these

This summer (viz. Anno 1597) there was a great business for the trial of witches, amongst others, one Margaret Atkin being apprehended on suspicion and threatened with torture, did confess herself guilty, being examined touching her associates in that trade, she named a few, and perceiving her delations find credit, made offer to detect all of that sort, and to purge the country of them, so she might have her life granted. For the reason of her knowledge, she said that they had a secret mark, all of that sort, in their eyes, whereby she could surely tell, how soon she looked upon any, whether they were witches or not, and in this she was so readily believed, that for the space of three or four months she was carried from town to town to make discoveries in that kind. Many were brought in question by her delations, especially at Glasgow, where diverse innocent women, through the credulity of the minister, Mr. John Cowper, were condemned and put to death. In the end she was found to be a mere deceiver, and sent back to Fife, where she was first apprehended. At her trial she affirmed all to be false that she had confessed of herself or others, and persisted in this to her death, which made many forethink their too great forwardness that way, and moved the King to recall his commission given out against such persons, discharging all proceedings against them, except in case of a voluntary confession, till a solid order should be taken by the estates touching the form that should be kept in their trial.

Thus that famous historian.

2 If two credible persons shall affirm upon oath that they have seen the party accused speaking such words, or doing things which none but such as have familiarity with the

devil ever did or can do, that's a sufficient ground for conviction.

Some are ready to say that wizards are not so unwise as to do such things in the sight or hearing of others, but it is certain that they have very often been known to do so. How often have they been seen by others using enchantments<sup>3</sup> conjuring to raise storms<sup>2</sup> and have been heard calling upon their familiar spirits<sup>3</sup> and have been known to use spells and charms<sup>2</sup> and to shew in a glass or in a shew-stone persons absent<sup>2</sup> and to reveal secrets which could not be discovered but by the Devil<sup>2</sup>. And have not men been seen to do things which are above human strength, that no man living could do without diabolical assistances<sup>2</sup>. Claudia was seen by witnesses enough, to draw a slip which no human strength could move. Tuccia, a vestal virgin, was seen to carry water in a sieve. The Devil never assists men to do supernatural things undesired. When, therefore, such like things shall be testified against the accused party not by *spectres*, which are devils in the shape of persons either living or dead, but by real men or women who may be credited, it is proof enough that such an one has that conversation and correspondence with the Devil, as that he or she, whoever they be, ought to be exterminated from amongst men. This notwithstanding I will add it were better that ten suspected witches should escape, than that one innocent person should be condemned. That is an old saying, and true, *Prestat reum nocentem absolvi, quam ex prohibitis indicis & illegitima probatione condemnari* (It is better that a guilty person should be absolved, than that he should without sufficient ground of conviction be condemned). I had rather judge a witch to be an honest woman, than judge an honest woman as a witch. The Word of God directs men not to proceed to the execution of the most capital offenders until such time as upon searching diligently, the matter is found to be a truth, and the thing certain (Deut. 13. 14, 15).

An acquaintance<sup>1</sup> of mine at London, in his description of New England, declares that as to their religion, the people there are like

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Morden in his *Geogra. Phy.* p. 577 [*Mather's note*]

Mr. Perkins.<sup>1</sup> It is no dishonor to us, if that be found true. I am sorry that any amongst us begin to slight so great a man, whom the most learned in foreign lands speak of with admiration, on the account of his polite and acute judgment. It is a grave and good advice which he giveth in his *Discourse of Witchcrafts* (Chap. 7, Sect. 2) wherewith I conclude

I would therefore wish and advise all jurors who give the verdict upon life and death in the Court of Assizes, to take good heed, that as they be diligent in zeal of God's glory and the good of his church, in detecting of witches by all sufficient and lawful means, so likewise they would be careful what they do, and not to condemn any party suspected upon bare presumptions, without sound and sufficient proofs that they be not guilty through their own rashness of shedding innocent blood

## POSTSCRIPT

The design of the preceding dissertation is not to plead for witchcrafts, or to appear as an advocate for witches. I have therefore written another discourse, proving that there are such horrid creatures as witches in the world, and that they are to be extirpated and cut off from amongst the people of God, which I have thoughts and inclinations in due time to publish, and I am abundantly satisfied that there have been, and are still, most cursed witches in the land. More than one or two of those now in prison have freely and credibly acknowledged their communion and familiarity with the spirits of darkness, and have also declared unto me the time and occasion, with the particular circumstances of their hellish obligations and abominations

Nor is there designed any reflection on those worthy persons who have been concerned in the late proceedings at Salem. They are wise and good men, and have acted with all fidelity according to their light, and have out of tenderness declined the doing of some things which in our own judgments they were satisfied about. Having therefore so arduous a case before them, pity and prayers rather than censures are their due, on which account I

am glad that there is published to the world (by my son) a breviat<sup>1</sup> of the trials of some who were lately executed, whereby I hope the thinking part of mankind will be satisfied, that there was more than that which is called *spectre* evidence for the conviction of the persons condemned. I was not myself present at any of the trials, excepting one, viz. that of George Burroughs. Had I been one of his judges, I could not have acquitted him, for several persons did upon oath testify that they saw him do such things as no man that has not a devil to be his familiar could perform. And the judges affirm that they have not convicted anyone merely on the account of what spectres have said, or of what has been represented to the eyes or imaginations of the sick bewitched persons. If what is here exposed to public view may be a means to prevent it for the future, I shall not repent of my labor in this undertaking. I have been prevailed with, so far as I am able to discern the truth in these dark cases, to declare my sentiments, with the arguments which are of weight with me, hoping that what is written may be of some use to discover the depths of Satan, and to prevent innocent ones having their lives endangered, or their reputations ruined, by being through the subtilty and power of the devils, in consideration with the ignorance and weakness of men, involved amongst the guilty. It becomes those of my profession to be very tender in cases of blood, and to imitate our Lord and Master, who came not to destroy the lives of men, but to save them.

1692

1693

## THE GREAT BLESSING OF PRIMITIVE COUNSELLORS

After his return from England with the new royal charter for Massachusetts in 1693, Increase Mather was asked to preach the customary sermon to the Governor and the House of Deputies, or lower house, before the latter proceeded to elect the members of the Council, or upper house, for the ensuing year. In it he addressed Governor Dudley with his usual directness, calling the former's attention to Mather's objection to the governor's veto power. The sermon when published shortly afterward was prefaced with a defense of

<sup>1</sup> abridged account

<sup>1</sup> Rev William Perkins (1558-1602), whose *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcrafts* was published in 1608

the Charter and Mather's effort to secure a better one. By "primitive counsellors," the speaker means the earliest upright judges and magistrates in Israel and, by inference, New England. He also expresses his aristocratic tendency in his views on the selection of councillors.

ISAIAH 1:26: *I will Restore thy Counsellors as at the Beginning.* 1234979

When Austin<sup>1</sup> sent to Ambrose, craving his advice what part of the Scripture he should especially read, he commended the prophet Isaiah to him. He [Isaiah] continued prophesying a very long time, to be sure above sixty (some think above fourscore) years.

In his public ministry, he never spared any unto whom he was sent to deliver messages in the name of the Lord. His style is not only heroic and majestical, becoming a magnanimous spirit, but very evangelical. Whence some of the ancients have called him the *Fifth Evangelist* and the *Apostle of the Old Testament*. His divine sayings (some or other of them) are quoted no less than sixty times in the New Testament. The usual method observed by him in his sermons is with awful severity to threaten judgments on the impenitent, and to predict and promise mercy to the truly penitent. And so he does in this text and context.

In the preceding verse the Lord by the prophet declares that the judgments inflicted on his people should be sanctified to their reformation. He would turn his hand upon them, not in wrath but in mercy, so as purely to *purge away their dross*. This verse is a farther confirmation of that prediction, wherein there are two great blessings promised to Jerusalem.

1. That judges (i.e. chief magistrates) should be restored to them as at the first.

This was necessary in order to their being a reformed people. For it was by means of the profaneness of their princes that the city and nation was corrupted. Nor could a national reformation be expected until such time as the great ones therein should have their hearts set for religion and righteousness.

2. The Lord does here promise His people that they shall have counsellors as at the

beginning. For although the chief magistrate should be for reformation and holiness, if his counsellors be not so too, little good can be expected; therefore both are promised as a singular favor of God unto Jerusalem. The doctrine before us to be insisted on, as suitable to the present occasion, is,

*That primitive counsellors are a singular mercy and blessing of God to His people.*

The doctrine may be confirmed in three propositions. 0111973V

PROPOSITION I. *Good counsellors are the gift of God.* The Lord saith here, "I will restore thy judges and thy counsellors." It is not in the power of all the men in the world to make a good counsellor, except God first make him to be such an one. There are but few men in the world comparatively who are fit to give counsel, especially in the difficult affairs of state. And they that are, it is God that has furnished them with gifts and qualifications for such a station. "Who maketh thee to differ," saith the Apostle, "and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7) Who is it that makes one man to be greater or better than another? To be richer or wiser than another? It is the Lord that makes it to be so. When John Baptist's disciples were troubled that another (though infinitely his superior) was preferred before him, he said to them, "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven" (John 3:27). If a man has reputation above another, he has received it from heaven; and if he has great accomplishments in more respect than one, he is beholden to heaven for them all. It is said of Solomon that God gave him wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart even as the sand that is on the sea-shore, because of the infinite number of wise conceptions that his large soul was able to comprehend (1 Kings, 4:29). Royal endowments were conferred on him, and it was God that did make him fit to be a king. So if any man has the understanding which is requisite in a counsellor, 'tis God that has given him that understanding. And it is His providence that does order who shall be such. There are some in the world who are well accomplished to be in such a capacity that are not made use of.

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine

There are that have this pre-eminence belonging to them as their birthright. Noble men are *consiliarii nati*.<sup>1</sup> Others are chosen and constituted by the supreme power. In some places the people have a concurrence in the election of counsellors. This notwithstanding, the God of Heaven determines and overrules all. Whoever may have an hand in the choice, their spirits and all their actions are disposed of by an invisible power. The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord (Prov 16 33).

Moreover, when any persons are qualified for, and chosen unto a service of this nature, it is God that does incline their hearts to accept of that trouble. Indeed, the generality of men (and especially such as are unfit) need no great persuasion to comply with such offers. But there are some who are as averse to public employments as was Moses when he said, "Send, I pray thee, by the hand of whom thou wilt send, only let me be excused." I have had the happiness to be acquainted with a great and noble personage, who was desired by two kings successively to be of their council, but declined it. The affairs of a people may be so perplexed as that a wise man may be afraid to meddle, or to be any way interested in their public concerns. Thus we see in what the prophet speaks (Isa. 3. 6, 7), "Be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand, . . . I will not be an healer. Make me not a ruler of the people." "I see," saith he "you are a ruined people, and I have no mind that your ruin should be under my hand, therefore I will not accept of your offer." Counsellors (such as are so by their place and office) do assist in government. Now the work of government is no easy labor. That celebrated saying of Melancthon's has a great deal of truth in it, that there are three hard labors: *parturiens*, the labor of childbirth, *docentis*, the labor of one that is a teacher; *regentis*, the labor of one that is a ruler. They that never did, and were never fit to make trial of it, may think it easy, but others do not find it so. One of the kings of England had in all the windows of his house a crown in a bush of thorns, to signify what cares do attend government. If then wise men shall be willing to

deny themselves as to their own repose, and to encounter with many difficulties in serving the public interest, it is God that has made them so.

Proposition II. *Primitive counsellors are men of singular qualifications.* The Scripture mentions especially four graces which rulers and counsellors should be adorned with; and they which have them being qualified according to that rule which is from the beginning, are primitive counsellors.

The first is *piety towards God*. Counsellors ought to be, and counsellors at the beginning were, godly men. So it was when the children of Israel first began to be a commonwealth under Moses; and at their beginning to be a settled kingdom under David. The judges, who were governors, were godly, and some of the kings of Israel were holy men, and then we may be sure their counsellors were so too. (Psal 43) "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." This was spoken concerning David's being set apart to be the chief ruler over the people of God; so they that are set apart to assist him whom God has made ruler and governor in chief ought to be godly. The first counsellor of state that we read of in the Scripture was Jethro, a very pious person. He advised Moses to choose some to assist him in government, and sheweth how they should be qualified. "Provide," saith he, "such as fear God" (Exod. 18 31), such as will by their authority and example encourage others to fear and serve Him; that will make the advancement of God's interest their chief design, that will so act and so speak as men that really believe they must give an account to the great and eternal God, that will often think with themselves, "Is this counsel according to the approving will of God?" and that will not for the world advise to anything which they believe is contrary thereunto.

2. *Fidelity towards men* is another requisite in a counsellor. A primitive counsellor is qualified with righteousness as well as piety. "Choose men of truth," said Jethro. Counsellors are rulers. Now he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God (2 Sam. 23.3). They ought to be men that will give to God the things that are God's, and to Caesar, the things that are Caesar's; yes, that will give to

<sup>1</sup> counsellors by birth

all men their due. Counsellors ought to be, and counsellors at the beginning were, faithful to him that is the chief ruler, in advising him for the best. Such an one was Hushai, the archite unto David (II Sam. 17 15): "Thus and thus did Ahitophel counsel, and thus and thus have I counselled." He saved the life of his prince by giving that counsel. Men in such a station should moreover approve themselves faithful to the interest of the people, whose welfare as counsellors they are bound to endeavor. The prince and the people have not opposite interests. He that promotes the true interest of the one, does so of the other also. A great emperor was wont to say, *non mihi sed populo* (I am set in this high station, not for myself, but for the nation's sake). So are counsellors to advise unto such things as the people, the country who are concerned in them, may have cause to bless God for them. Such a counsellor was Mordecai in the court of Persia (Esth 10 3), "Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus." He was advanced to be a right honorable privy counsellor, seeking the wealth of his people. It was said of one of the kings of France, that he was, *titularis non tutelaris rex, defunct non praefuit rei publicae*.<sup>1</sup> So may it be said of such counsellors as do not intend and faithfully design the good of that people over whom the providence of God has placed them; they have only the name, but not the nature of counsellors in them. True primitive counsellors they are not.

3 It is necessary that counsellors should be endued with the grace of *courage*. The spirit of counsel and of might, that is to say of courage, are conjoined, because counsellors should be men of courage (Isa 2 2). And this is implied in that of their fearing God, i.e., they must fear God and not men. Moses gave it in charge unto those whom he did commission to be judges (Deut. 1 17), "You shall not be afraid of the face of man." The like is to be said unto counsellors. Solomon's throne was supported by lions (II Kings 10:20). Thus counsellors who are the supporters of the government should be of magnanimous and undaunted spirits. The pillars of a land must not warp either for fear or favor. They may

not fear the frowns of them that are above them, so as to neglect their duty. If they should see the chief ruler in danger of falling into any error, which would be injurious to himself or to his people, they ought freely though humbly to advise him to desist.

It is reported concerning the Chinese, that the counsellors of their prince do with great freedom admonish him of dangerous errors, and that if they do it not, they are not accounted worthy of the name of counsellors, or men of honor. Joab did the part of a faithful counsellor unto David, in dissuading from his ambitious design of numbering the people. "Why," said he "does my lord the King require this? Why will he be a cause of trespass unto Israel?" (I Chron 4 5). And at another time, when David was too much transported with passion at the death of his son Absalom, Joab advised him to refrain himself, and to speak kindly to the men that had hazarded their lives to save his, and David had the wisdom to hearken to that good advice. Nor should counsellors in the discharge of their duty be afraid of the multitude. Job saith, "Did I fear a great multitude? or did the contempt of families terrify me?" (Job 31 34). He knew that if he did punish vice, the families and relations of such as had suffered the law would reproach him and a multitude would clamor against him, but that would not deter him from a faithful discharge of the duty of his place, such courage becomes a counsellor.

Let a man give the best counsel in the world, he shall never please everybody. There is such variety and contrariety in the opinions of men, that all cannot be pleased, sometimes not a few only, but the major part, take in with the wrong side and have their unreasonable dissatisfactions, now counsellors must do their duty, let the world be pleased or displeased. They may not at any time be afraid to own Christ and his cause, but if they see designs on foot against the best interest, they ought boldly to interpose, and to oppose themselves. It is said of Joseph of Arimathea, that he was an honorable counsellor (Mark 15 43). Some think that he was one of the Sanhedrin, the great council of the nation. Others suppose him to be one of the governor's council. Now when there was a consult about putting Christ

<sup>1</sup> King in name, not guardian of the people, he neglected, not ruled, the state

to death, this Joseph entered his dissent, and after the Lord was by forms of law and false witnesses and an accusation of pretended treason, condemned and murdered, this honorable counsellor went boldly unto Pilate, who had received a commission to be governor over the province of Judea, and craved the body of Jesus. Thus did he with exemplary courage own Christ and his cause.

And yet more than all this is required in a counsellor. A man may be a pious, a faithful, a courageous man, and for all that not fit to be a counsellor. Therefore 4 It is necessary that a counsellor be qualified with the grace of wisdom. The divine wisdom is expressed by that of being great in counsel (Jer. 32 19). Only God, angels, and men are causes by counsel. The more wisdom there is in any man, the more able he is to give counsel. It is noted concerning that faithful minister of God, Zachariah, who was (as interpreters have noted) an ecclesiastical counsellor, one with whom the King was wont to advise in matters of religion, that he was a wise counsellor (I Chron. 26 14). So should all counsellors be men of wisdom. Hence 'tis said by the prophet (Jer. 49 7), "Is wisdom no more in Teman? Is counsel perished from the prudent? Is their wisdom vanished?" Imprudent men are unfit to be made counsellors. Pharaoh's counsellors 30 of old were wise men, but his chief counsellor, Joseph (though a young man) did excel them all in wisdom. Pharaoh said to him, "There is none so discreet and wise as thou art" (Gen. 41 37). And the psalmist saith of him that he taught Pharaoh's senators (his counsellors) wisdom (Psal. 105:22). Courage without wisdom, in one that undertakes to be a counsellor, will do more hurt than good. An horse that is full of mettle, if he has no eyes to see 40 his way before him, is a dangerous creature to make use of. If rash, heady, unthinking men are made use of for counsellors, the public weal of such a people is in danger. The carnal Jews, indeed, depended too much on this, that they had wise men at [the] helm to be their counsellors of state (Jer. 18 18). "The law shall not perish from the priests, nor counsel from the wise." We have wiser men than Jeremy (say they) to sit in council, and therefore what he adviseth unto is not to be re-

garded; but though a nation whose counsellors are great politicians may possibly be ruined (as the Jewish nation was), if they have not such counsellors, they are in an ill case, as we shall have occasion anon further to declare.

Proposition III. *Such counsellors as these described are a singular mercy and blessing of God to a people.* I shall only mention two things that evince the truth of this proposition.

1. Civil government is a great and necessary blessing. Without it the world would soon be dissolved and run into confusion. As one speaks, the world would not then be a *kosmos*, a beautiful structure, but a *kaos*, an horrid heap of disorder. What would kingdoms be were it not for government but (as Austin expresses it) *magna latrocinia*, great dens of thieves? Let a people that have found the benefit of government be without it for a while, and they will quickly be made sensible that 'tis a great and a necessary blessing. I have read that it was once a law amongst the Persians, that after the death of their king, every man should have liberty to do what he pleased for five days, and in these five days' time there was such horrid doings that all the people prized government the better all their days after.

Now, government cannot well be managed by one alone without the assistance of counsellors. Many eyes see more than one. 'Tis possible that one man may discern that which another does not see. Besides, the burden will be too heavy for one alone. Hence Moses said to the children of Israel, "I am not able to bear you myself alone" (Deut. 19), and again (verse 12), "How can I myself alone bear your cumbrances, and your burdens, and your strife?" Where there is a great people, the burden is too heavy for a mortal man, though never so wise and able. Moses was a wise statesman, nevertheless Jethro advised him to take some to assist him in ruling that numerous people because else the burden would be so heavy upon him as that he must needs sink and break under the weight of it (Exod. 18 18). The wisest ruler in the world needs the assistance of counsellors. Solomon (the wisest of men) had his counsellors about him. The truth is, the light of nature has taught men

not only to erect governments, but that there should be counsellors to assist the chief ruler. The Scripture informs that not only the kings of Israel, but the kings of the gentiles had their counsellors, with whom they were wont to take advice in all arduous affairs. Ezra blessed God, who had extended mercy to him before Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, and his counsellors (Ezra 7 28). And in the 14 verse, "He was sent of the king and his seven counsellors." Perhaps there might be superstition in their fixing on the number seven, if they did it (as some learned men suppose) because they would have their government to resemble the heavens, wherein there are seven planets. But as to the thing, that there should be counsellors, the light of nature instructed them; and therefore it is so in all nations and governments.

2. The interest and influence of good counsellors is great. They have a great interest in the chief ruler. In governments which are more absolute, and much more in those that are more limited, it is so, especially where the principal ruler cannot act without their consent. It cannot be expressed of how great concernment it is for such a people to be blessed with counsellors as at the beginning. Not only whole provinces but whole kingdoms have fared the better for the wise counsels of one good man. So did Egypt, because there was such a wise counsellor as Joseph found amongst them. And the whole kingdom of Israel found the benefit of it when David made the prophet Nathan to be of his cabinet council. Solomon owed his crown, and the people much of their happiness, to the seasonable advice of Nathan, which had a great influence on the royal heart of King David in causing him to nominate Solomon to succeed in government, whereby great confusions that otherwise would have happened were prevented. Rehoboam had not lost ten parts in twelve of his kingdom if he had followed the wise advice of his father's counsellors. Nor had Zedekiah lost his kingdom, nor had the city and temple been burnt, and the whole land made desolate, if the good counsel of the prophet Jeremiah had been hearkened unto, whom God sent to be a counsellor to them "If I give thee counsel," said the prophet to the king, "wilt thou not hearken

unto me?" (Jer. 38:15) It had been well if he had.

When there are counsellors as at the beginning, two things usually follow which make a people happy.

1. There will be good judges. Much of the welfare of a people does consist in their having able and upright judges that will endeavor to approve themselves in all things like unto God, the judge of judges, with whom there is no iniquity nor respect of persons. Hence Moses, who loved the Lord's people in the wilderness more than he loved his own life, out of respect to their welfare took of the chief of the tribes, wise men and known, and gave them a commission and instruction to act as judges, solemnly charging them to acquit themselves as became men in their places (Deut. 1.15-16). Now if there be counsellors as at the beginning, there will be judges as at the first. It cannot but be so in a government where no judges are appointed but with the consent of the council. Good counsellors will advise to good judges, and good judges will make the land happy.

2. Where there are good counsellors, religion and reformation will be encouraged. Primitive counsellors will concern themselves to uphold religion in the truth, purity, and power of it. In King Joash his time, as long as Jehoiadah was his chief counsellor, the service of the house of the Lord was duly attended, but when ill counsellors succeeded and were hearkened unto, they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers and served groves and idols. There is no great fear or danger of apostasy in matters of religion as long as there are counsellors as at the beginning. It is in their power to prevent it, and they will prevent it. For a people to enjoy the only true religion, to have not only liberty but encouragement to serve God in the way and after the manner which Himself in His Holy Word has appointed, is a mercy beyond expression great. And thus it will be as long as there are such counsellors as I am speaking of. Reformers are great blessings to the places where they live. Primitive counsellors are of a reforming spirit. The work of reformation useth to go forward when such are in place. Besides Scripture examples, we have seen it

in our own nation. In the reign of King Henry VIII, when he had such counsellors as Cromwell and Cranmer, there was in some things a great reformation. And in several reigns since that, wise counsellors have made our nation happy and as to many particulars, more reformed than once it was. There is a glorious day a-coming (and I trust in Christ that it is not far off) when the church of God throughout the whole world will be in a more reformed state than ever yet was known since the world began, when judges as at the first, and counsellors as at the beginning, will be the instruments in the hands of Christ, by whom it shall be effected. Wherefore in the next words to my text, it is said, "Afterwards thou shalt be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City" Jerusalem, the church of God all the world over, shall become a city of righteousness, but first, and that it may be so, primitive counsellors shall be restored

We come now to make some application of the doctrine thus far insisted on.

## USE I

Hence the contrary unto this, of a people's being blessed with primitive counsellors, is a sore judgment. It is said that "where no counsel is, the people fall, but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14) Where there are good counsellors, and a multitude of them, we may expect good, and much good; a multitude of blessings will be on such a people, but where there are none such, nothing but ruin can be hoped for. The removal of wise counsellors is threatened as a sore judgment (Isai 3:3). When a people is reduced unto that condition, that there are none fit for counsellors to be found amongst them, their state is deplorable, they are either perfectly undone, or the next door to ruin (Mic. 4:9). "Why dost thou cry aloud? Is the counsellor perished?" There is cause enough to cry aloud if it be so. They may well make loud outcries of their being an undone people amongst whom the counsellor is perished. And thus it is where there are counsellors of pernicious principles and inclinations. Such an one there was in Nineveh, where the King of Assyria kept his court (Neh. 1:11): "There is one come out of thee that imagineth evil

against the Lord, a wicked counsellor." Perhaps Raahshekeh might be the counsellor whom the prophet there reflects upon. However, one he was that advised the King to persecute the people of God, and to act arbitrarily, without any respect to right or wrong. Such counsellors there were in Persia, who persuaded the emperor to establish iniquity by a law and then to persecute and murder all such as could not with a good conscience conform to that law (Dan. 6:7).

Politicians have laid it down for a maxim, and there is a truth in it, that a people had better have a bad prince with a good council, than a good prince with a bad council. For evil counsellors will (as one expressed it) by their poisonous whispers and instillations at the ear, corrupt the heart and taint the spirits of the best princes. Kings and kingdoms have often been ruined by evil counsels. So was King Ahaziah, who would needs take some of the house of Ahab to be of his council, and it is noted that they were his counsellors to his destruction (II Chron. 22:4). The kingdom of Israel was divided and so weakened after the death of Solomon, and unhappy counsellors were the cause of it. And thus it has been in our nation, not only in former times, but in our days. How came the late abdicated king to be deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory to be taken from him, but because, instead of hearkening to counsellors as at the beginning, he would be governed by popish counsels?

## USE II.

This informs and directs them in whose power it is to choose counsellors what manner of persons they are to elect, namely such as were at the beginning. The word of the Lord does instruct this *General Assembly*, whom they ought to choose or confirm this day. What manner of persons the representatives of this people, who are here before the Lord, ought to nominate, and what manner of persons the governor of this province is by the word of the Lord obliged to approve of. Unto you that are by the several towns throughout this government deputed to act in their stead, let me say, you have heard from the word of the Lord what kind of men primitive counsellors



were, viz. God-fearing men, faithful, courageous, prudent, you have by the *Royal Charter* granted to you power to nominate such, and you will please God in so doing. And let me further add here, that it is very meet that persons nominated for counsellors should be men of estate, and of some port in the world (Isa. 3:7): "Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler." Thou hast an estate to support the place and dignity of a ruler, and therefore we choose thee. If this be not considered, government will be rendered contemptible, and that cannot be without sin. Let me also say to you who are the representatives of this people, that it will not be prudence in you (at this time especially) to propose such assistants to the governor as you cannot but know that he cannot accept of, and so to necessitate him to make use of his negative voice when he has no desire to do it. And you cannot but know that whoever is governor, he will judge it necessary that many of his council should have their habitations near to his, that so if any sudden emergency or danger to the public should happen, his council may be at hand to advise with. And you cannot but know that no governor will take those into his council who are malcontents and do what in them is, to make others to be disaffected to the government. No governor can take such men into his bosom.

And as for yourself, Excellent Sir,<sup>1</sup> whom God has made the captain over his people in this wilderness, it is a very great power which the Divine Providence has put into your hands, that you should have a *negative* on the *elections* of this day—a power which I confess, neither you nor anyone else should have had, if any interest that I was capable to make could have prevented it. You know, Sir, that I humbly argued against it to the King's Majesty, and to many of his chief ministers of state. But I now see that God has ordered it to be as it is, in mercy to this his people. What it may be for the future, when the ingratitude of an unthankful murmuring generation of men shall have provoked the Most High again to say of New England, "Her enemies shall prosper, and her adversaries shall be chief," the Lord knoweth; but at present there is more good

than hurt in it, and will be so as long as there shall be a governor whose heart is engaged to seek not himself but the public good. You have, Sir, at this day good men, and some of them as wise men as any this country does afford, to be of your council. And not one of them can be removed without your consent since the present counsellors must continue until new ones are chosen, and no election of a new one is valid without your approbation signified under your hand. And although it is necessary that some new ones be elected, it is convenient that there be some further alterations, nevertheless, no one that is disaffected to the best and highest interest, or to the government of their Majesties in England, or that is an enemy to the government here, can be imposed on you. So that it is in your power to make this people happy one year longer. And I earnestly pray to God to incline your heart to do what shall be pleasing in His sight and most conducing to the welfare of His people.

## USE III

I conclude with a word of exhortation which concerns us all.

Let us do what in us lieth that this so great a mercy may be continued to us.

We read in the Gospel that when the Lord Jesus Christ had taken a text out of the prophet Isaiah, He began His sermon with saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). So let me conclude my discourse with saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears, and before your eyes." For God has not only given but restored to New England, counsellors as at the beginning. We are all greatly concerned to endeavor the continuance of such a favor.

You will say, "What shall we do that it may be so?"

*Ans.* 1. Let us be careful that those sins which provoke the Lord to withhold this mercy from His people be not found amongst us. It is sin that does provoke God to take away good rulers and to send bad ones. It is storied that when a very unworthy person was advanced to an high station, a religious man expostulating with Heaven about it, received that answer, that it was not because such an

<sup>1</sup> Governor Joseph Dudley

one was worthy of that place but because that sinful people were worthy to be punished with having so wicked a ruler set over them. It was certainly a true confession which the Levites made on a public fast day (Neh. 9:37). "The kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins have dominion over our bodies and over our cattle at their pleasure." They once had merciful rulers, and those too from amongst themselves, but they sinned 10 them away and were for a time in the hands of strangers who did exercise an arbitrary power over them, so that they could not say that their cattle, or their lands, or anything was their own. all was at the will and pleasure of strangers. New England has had some experience of this. Your land, strangers did devour it in your presence. You must give what they pleased to demand that so you might have a pretended confirmation of your estates and properties The counsellors which 20 then carried all were not counsellors as at the beginning God has mercifully delivered you from them But if the sins which brought that judgment on the land are still amongst us unreformed and unrepented of, what can be expected but that after a clear sunshine for a while, the clouds will return again with greater darkness than ever? What those sins were I need not say, so much having been spoken 30 concerning that, many years ago To be sure, the great sin of this generation is their forgetting the errand on which their fathers came into this wilderness, which was not to seek great things for themselves, but to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Let this people recover their primitive holiness and they need not doubt but God will bless them with primitive counsellors, and that they shall see that promise made to Jacob fulfilled 40 (Jer 30 8). "Strangers shall no more serve themselves of him"

2 Let us be very thankful for what we enjoy To be thankful for mercies is the way to have them continued. What would not New England have given, no longer since than five years ago, to have been sure of what they now enjoy? And what though you have not some great privileges which once you had, and which should have been restored to you if 50 he that speaketh to you this day could have

obtained them for you, though it be with the expense of his own life and of all that is dear to him in this world. Will you be thankful for nothing because you have not everything just as you would have? Do any of you say, all that you have is nothing? I hear there are some (though not many) that say so. Let me reason with you before the Lord this day. You have by the Royal Charter granted to you, property confirmed, so that every man may sit under his own vine and his own fig tree And is this nothing? I am sure you would have thought it something, and a great thing too, but a few years since. You have all English liberties restored to you, so that a governor with a junto of his council cannot (as of late they did) make laws and impose taxes on you without your own consent, by your representatives. And is this nothing? No governor can now cause you or your children or servants (as not long since they might) to be sent out of the Province Your present charter secures you against all such invasions And do you now account it nothing? You have peculiar charter privileges granted to you which no other English plantation in the world has. Witness your being here this day. No other plantation has that privilege of nominating to the governor, his council, nor have the King's subjects in England itself that privilege And is this nothing? Your religion is secured to you. Now you need not fear being sent to prison (as some of you were under a late government) because you scruple swearing by a book You may worship God in the greatest purity, and no one may disturb you. If you set apart days for solemn prayer or praises as the Divine Providence may call thereunto, you need not fear being interrupted or obstructed therein, as it was here six years ago. You may by laws not only protect but encourage that religion which is the general profession of the country And is all this nothing? You have at present a governor, and a lieutenant governor, (and all the council likewise) from amongst yourselves, who do unfeignedly seek your welfare. And is this nothing? Some of you say it will not be long thus, in which you speak more than you know. But suppose 50 so. Ezra, and the Lord's people with him, thought they had great cause to be thankful

to God in that He had given them a little reviving in their bondage, and extended mercy to them in the sight of the King of Persia, who had by a charter granted them liberty to set up the house of God and to repair the desolations thereof, as we may do this day. But if a change come, and the Lord be provoked again to set rulers over you that will obstruct what is good and desirable, you that are the murmurers will be found the guilty cause of it before the Lord, in the name of the Lord be it spoken to you

3. Prayer unto God may be a means to obtain the continuance of this so great a mercy. Be earnest with God that you may still have counsellors as at the beginning. And you are on this (as well as on many other) accounts concerned to pray for the King and Queen; for as long as their present Majesties shall hold the English scepter in their hands, we in New England may hope to see good days. God has blessed our nation with a king in the preservation of whom the fate of Europe and of the church of God is more concerned than it has been in the life of any one person for these thousand years. A king that fights the battles of the Lord. A king that when a crown was offered to him declared that nothing should oblige him to be a persecutor. Who that has a spark of grace in his heart will not pray for such a king? A king that has more than once or twice in my hearing and to me

expressed a singular respect to his good subjects in these colonies.

And pray for the Queen.

For God has blessed the nation with a queen (as well as with a king) the like unto whom (without reflection on any predecessors) never sat on the English throne. A queen that loveth all people that are good, whatever their persuasions in matters relating to conscience may be. A queen that is a pattern of virtue to the nation. A queen that has (to my certain knowledge) interceded with the King that he would be kind to New England. Pray then for the life and prosperity of such a king and such a queen. And I do the rather urge this upon you because I have sometimes been favored with the liberty humbly to assure their Majesties that there are none in the world that pray for them with more fervency and frequency than do their subjects in New England. I beseech you make it appear that I was not mistaken in what I have affirmed concerning you

And pray for them that shall be established as counsellors and rulers over you this day, that the Lord Jesus, whose name is counsellor, will be with them, that the Lord Jesus, who saith, "Counsel is mine and sound wisdom," will please to give them of his spirit, which is the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

1693

## 1663 ~ Cotton Mather ~ 1728

THE ELDEST SON of Increase and Maria (Cotton) Mather, Cotton Mather felt himself destined by birth to be a leader in the fight for orthodox Calvinism. He entered Harvard at the age of twelve, qualified to do the work, but not so well adjusted to association with other undergraduates who were not precocious. When he received his degree in 1678, he was so seriously afflicted with stammering that the ministry seemed closed to him and he took up medicine instead. Two years later, however, he had recovered so far that he began to help his father in the Second Church of Boston. In 1685 he was ordained in that church, where he served for the rest of his life.

During his father's absence in England, Cotton Mather conducted the parish alone and also led in the fight against Governor Andros. When the Salem witchcraft cases arose, they presented a problem peculiarly congenial to him. His attitude in the matter was scientific on the whole, although like his contemporaries he naturally accepted evidence of the existence of a world of spirits. He even took into his house a child believed to be the victim of witchcraft, in order that he might study her case. Like his father, he disapproved of the use of "spectral evidence," but allowed his judgment to be overborne. His concern, however, was not with convictions in court, but with the curative properties of fasting and prayer in the treatment of witches. After the trials were ended, he exchanged controversial pamphlets with Robert Calef, who disbelieved altogether in witchcraft—a surprising position for the time.

Cotton Mather fought beside his father for Sir William Phips and the new charter, and against all weakening of religious orthodoxy. The *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), his *magnum opus*, was designed to check the rising force of liberalism by pointing back to the special goodness of God to New England in the early days of stricter observance of religion and morality. In both political and religious causes, however, he opposed the current of popular thought and suffered in prestige thereby, though he was throughout life a power to be reckoned with, as the Franklin brothers found. As Professor Parrington has remarked, he always stood in his father's shadow, and the scope though not the productivity of his genius was restricted in consequence. Three times the presidency of Harvard, which he yearned for, passed him by; and when what was perhaps his great opportunity offered itself—a nomination to be rector of Yale, the new orthodox college to be founded in Connecticut—he put it aside to remain in the neighborhood of his father and his college.

Mather was fruitful in good works. He founded numerous organizations for social betterment, from education of Negro slaves to missions for the Indians. Benjamin Franklin admitted that Mather's *Essays to Do Good* helped to inspire his own humanitarian interests. Enormously learned, like his father, he had a keen interest in mathematical and natural science, though he was never able to free his mind from the idea of supernatural tampering with natural forces. In 1713 he was elected to the Royal Society, to which he had addressed scientific communications on the weather and other subjects. Although he never went abroad, he kept up correspondence with learned men in England and on the Continent. During an epidemic of the smallpox, he introduced the practice of inoculation at Boston, in the face of unintelligent denunciation and threats of personal violence. In one of his latest works, *The Christian Philosopher* (1721), he gives evidence of having been interested by current deistic ideas of a benevolent God revealed in the harmonious design of nature.

His output of writing was phenomenal. He wrote or edited more than 450 books and pamphlets, in numerous fields of thought. A conscious stylist, in his middle period he maintained the elaborate characteristics of the seventeenth-century divines, but in spite of his fondness for allusions, quotations, puns, and ornate prose, he consistently held richness of thought more important than elegance of expression. He exhibits, however, a considerable range, consciously adjusting his manner to his subject matter. In his latest prose, such as his *Manuductio ad Ministerium* and his *Essays to Do Good*, he uses a simple and direct style much like that of such English contemporaries as Dryden and Defoe.

Cotton Mather's works occupy seventeen pages of bibliography in the *CHAL*. His most important book is the *Magnalia Christi Americana* or *The Ecclesiastical History of New England from Its First Planting* (1702). His biography of his father, *Parentator*, appeared in 1724. Among his other writings the following may be mentioned: *A Poem to the Memory of . . . Mr. Urian Oakes* (1682); *The Present State of New England* (1690); *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1693); *Eleutheria* (1698); *The Boston Ebenezer* (1698); *Reasonable Religion* (1700); *Some Few Remarks upon a Scandalous Book by One Robert Calef* (1701); *Bonifacius*, called in later editions *Essays to Do Good* (1710); *The Christian Philosopher* (1721); *Sentiments on the Small-Pox Inoculated* (1721); and *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726). *Biblia Americana*, which he considered his best work, is still in manuscript in the Massachusetts Historical Society Library.

The article in the *DAB*, by Kenneth B. Murdock, contains a full bibliography. The best life is by Barrett Wendell (1891, reissued 1926), there are others by A. P. Marvin (1892) and by R. and L. Boas (1928). The "Mather Papers" are available in the Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections*, 4th series, VIII (1868). W. C. Ford edited Mather's *Diary* for the *Collections*, 7th series, VII and VIII (1921-1922). K. B. Murdock provides a good introduction in his *Selections from Cotton Mather* (1926) and a valuable chapter on Mather's influence in Vol. II of the *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts*, A. B. Hart, ed. (1928).

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The best bibliography is in J. L. Sibley's *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, III, 42-158 (1873-1885). *CHAL*, I, 407-423 (1917), adds more material.

From MAGNALLIA CHRISTI  
AMERICANA

*Observations of a Bewitched Child*

Among Cotton Mather's scientific interests was one in psychological phenomena not too clearly understood even today. It was characteristic of him that when the children of a family in his parish gave evidence of being bewitched, he took one of them into his own household for detached observation and counsel.

It was the eldest of these children that fell chiefly under my own observation, for I took her home to my own family, partly out of compassion to her parents, but chiefly that I might be a critical eye-witness of things that would enable me to confute the Sadducism<sup>1</sup> of this debauched age. Here she continued well for some days, applying her self to actions of industry and piety. But Nov. 20, 1688, she cried out, *Ah, they have found me out!* and immediately she fell into her fits, wherein we often observed that she would cough up a ball as big as a small egg, into the side of her wind pipe, that would near choke her till by stroking and by drinking it was again carried down.

When I prayed in the room, first her hands were with a *strong*, though not *even* force, clapt upon her ears, and when her hands were by our force pulled away, she cried out, *They make such a noise, I cannot hear a word!* She complained that *Glover's Chain* was upon her leg, and assaying to go, her gait was exactly such as the *chained witch* had before she died. When her tortures passed over, still frolics would succeed, wherein she would continue hours, yea, days together, talking perhaps never wickedly but always *wittily* beyond her self, and at certain provocations her torments would renew upon her, till we had left off to give them, yet she frequently told us in these frolics, *that if she might but steal or be drunk, she should be well immediately.* She told us *that she must go down to the bottom of our well*, (and we had much ado to hinder it) *for they said there was plate there, and they would bring her up safely again.*

We wondered at this, for she had never

<sup>1</sup> Sadduceism, scepticism in regard to extraordinary manifestations in spiritual matters

heard of any plate there; and we ourselves, who had newly bought the house, were ignorant of it, but the former owner of the house just then coming in, told us *there had been plate for many years lost at the bottom of the well.* Moreover, one singular passion that frequently attended her was this:

An *invisible chain* would be clapt about her, and she in much pain and fear, cry out when they began to put it on. Sometimes we could with our hands knock it off, as it began to be fastened, but ordinarily, when it was on, she would be pulled out of her seat with such violence, towards the fire, that it was as much as one or two of us could do to keep her out. Her eyes were not brought to be perpendicular to her feet when she rose out of her seat, as the mechanism of an humane body requires in them that rise, but she was dragged wholly by other hands. And if we stamped on the hearth just between her and the fire, she screamed out, *that by jarring the chain, we hurt her.*

I may add that *they* put an unseen rope, with a cruel noose, about her neck, whereby she was choked until she was black in the face, and though it was got off before it had killed her, yet there were the red marks of it, and of a finger and a thumb near it, remaining to be seen for some while afterwards. Furthermore, not only upon her own looking into the Bible, but if any one else in the room did it, *wholly unknown* to her, she would fall into unsufferable torments.

A *Quaker's book* being brought her, she could quietly read whole pages of it; only the name of GOD and CHRIST she still skipped over, being unable to pronounce it, except sometimes, stammering a minute or two or more upon it, and when we urged her to tell what the word was that she missed, she would say, *I must not speak it they say I must not. You know what it is 'Tis G, and O, and D.* But a book against Quakerism they would not allow her to meddle with. Such books as it might have been profitable and edifying for her to read, and especially her Catechisms, if she did but offer to read a line in them, she would be cast into hideous convulsions, and be tost about the house like a football, but books of jests being shewn her, she could

read them well enough, and have cunning descants upon them. Popish books *they* would not hinder her from reading; but *they* would from reading books against popery. A book which pretends to prove *that there are no witches* was easily read by her; only the name *devils* and *witches* might not be uttered. A book which proves *that there are witches* being exhibited unto her, she might not read it, and that expression in the story of *Ann Cole*, about 10 running to the rock, always threw her into sore confusions.

Drivers of these trials were made by many witnesses, but I considering that there might be a snare in it, put a seasonable stop to this fanciful business. Only I could not but be amazed at one thing: a certain Prayer-book being brought her, she not only could read it very well, but also did read a large part of it over, calling it her Bible, and putting a more 20 than ordinary respect upon it. If she were going into her tortures, at the tender of this book she would recover herself to read it, only when she came to the Lord's Prayer now and then occurring in that book, she would have her eyes put out; so that she must turn over a new leaf, and then she could read again. Whereas also there are Scriptures in that book, she could read them there, but if 30 any showed her the very same Scriptures in the Bible itself, she should sooner die than read them, and she was likewise made unable to read the Psalms in an ancient metre, which this Prayer-book had in the same volume with it.

Besides these, there was another inexplicable thing in her condition. Every now and then, an invisible horse would be brought unto her by those whom she only called *them*, and *her company*, upon the approach of which her eyes 40 would be still closed up, for (said she) *They say I am a tell-tale, and therefore they will not let me see them*. Hereupon she would give a spring as one mounting an horse, and settling her self in a riding posture, she would in her chair be agitated, as one sometimes ambling, sometimes trotting, and sometimes galloping very furiously. In these motions we could not perceive that she was moved by the stress of her feet upon the ground, for often she touched 50 it not. When she had rode a minute or two,

she would seem to be at a rendezvous with *them* that were *her company*, and there she would maintain a discourse with them, asking them many questions concerning herself (we gave her none of ours) and have answers from them which indeed none but herself perceived. Then would she return and inform us *how they did intend to handle her for a day or two afterwards*, and some other things that she inquired. Her horse would sometimes throw her with much violence; especially if any one stabbed or cut the air under her. But she would briskly mount again and perform her fantastic journeys, mostly in her chair, but sometimes also she would be carried from her chair out of one room into another, very oddly, in the postures of a riding woman. At length she pretended that her horse could ride up the stairs, and unto admiration she rode, (that is, was tossed as one that rode) up the stairs. There then stood open the study of one belonging to the family, into which entering, she stood immediately on her feet, and cried out, *They are gone! They are gone! They say that they cannot,—God won't let 'em come here!* Adding a reason for it, which the owner of the study thought more *kind* than true. And she presently and perfectly came to herself, so that her whole discourse and carriage was altered unto the greatest measure of sobriety, and she sat reading of the Bible and other good books, for a good part of the afternoon. Her affairs calling her anon to go down again, the daemons were in a quarter of a minute as bad upon her as before, and her horse was waiting for her. Some then, to see whether there had not been a fallacy in what had newly happened, resolved for to have her up unto the study, where she had been at ease before, but she was then so strangely distorted that it was an extreme difficulty to drag her up stairs. The daemons would pull her out of the people's hands, and make her heavier than perhaps three of herself. With incredible toil, though she kept screaming, *They say I must not go in*, she was pulled in; where she was no sooner got, but she could stand on her feet, and with an altered note, say, *Now I am well*.

She would be faint at first, and *say she felt something to go out of her!* (the noises whereof we sometimes heard, like those of a mouse),

but in a minute or two she could apply herself to devotion, and express herself with discretion, as well as ever in her life.

To satisfy some strangers, the experiment was drivers times with the same success, repeated; until my loathness to have any thing done like making a charm of a room, caused me to forbid the repetition of it. But enough of this. The ministers of Boston and Charlestown kept another day of prayer with fasting 10 for Goodwin's afflicted family; after which the children had a sensible but a gradual abatement of their sorrows, until perfect ease was at length restored unto them. The young woman dwelt at my house the rest of the winter; having by a virtuous conversation made herself enough welcome to the family. But ere long, I thought it convenient for me to entertain my congregation with a sermon on the memorable Providences wherein these 20 children had been concerned (afterwards published) When I had begun to study my sermon, her tormentors again seized upon her and managed her with a special design, as was plain, to disturb me in what I was then about.

In the worst of her extravagancies formerly, she was more dutiful to myself than I had reason to expect, but now her whole carriage to me was with a sauciness, which I was not used anywhere to be treated withal. She would 30 knock at my study door, affirming that *some below would be glad to see me*, though there was none that asked for me; and when I chid her for telling what was false, her answer was *Mrs. Mather is always glad to see you!* She would call to me with numberless impertinencies, and when I came down, she would throw things at me, though none of them could ever hurt me, and she would hector me at a strange rate for something I was doing above, and threaten me with mischief and reproach that should revenge it. Few tortures now attended her, but such as were provoked. Her frolics were numberless, if we may call them hers. I was in Latin telling some young gentlemen that if I should bid her look to God, her eyes would be put out, upon which her eyes were presently served so. Perceiving that her 40 troubles understood Latin, some trials were thereupon made whether they understood Greek and Hebrew, which it seems, they also

did; but the Indian languages they did seem not so well to understand.

When we went unto prayer, the daemons would throw her on the floor at the feet of him that prayed, where she would whistle, and sing, and yell, to drown the voice of the prayer, and she would fetch blows with her fist, and kicks with her foot, at the man that prayed, but still her fist and foot would always 10 recoil when they came within an inch or two of him, as if rebounding against a wall, and then she would beg hard of other people to strike him, which (you may be sure) not being done, she cried out, *He has wounded me in the head.* But before the prayer was over, she would be laid for dead, wholly senseless, and (unto appearance) breathless, with her belly swell'd like a drum; and sometimes with croaking noises in her. Thus would she lie, most exactly with the stiffness and posture of one that had been two days laid out for dead. Once lying thus, as he that was praying was alluding to the words of the Canaanites, and saying, *Lord, have mercy on a daughter vexed with a devil*, there came a big but low voice from her, in which the spectators did not see her mouth to move, *There's two or three of us*. When prayer was ended, she would revive in a minute or two, and continue as frolicsome 30 as before.

c. 1688

1702

### *Adventures of Sir William Phips*

.. Having first informed himself that there was another Spanish wreck, wherem was lost a mighty treasure, hitherto undiscovered, he had a strong impression upon his mind that *he* must be the discoverer; and he made such representations of his design at White-Hall,<sup>1</sup> that by the year 1683 he became the captain of a King's ship, and arrived at New-England commander of the *Alger-Rose*, a frigate of eighteen guns, and ninety-five men.

To relate all the dangers through which he passed, both by sea and land, and all the tiresome trials of his patience, as well as of his courage, while year after year the most vexing accidents imaginable delay'd the success of his design, it would even tire the patience of 50

<sup>1</sup> the palace of Charles II



the reader. For very great was the experiment that Captain Phips made of the Italian observation, "He that can't suffer both good and evil will never come to any great preferment." Wherefore I shall supersede all journal of his voyages to and fro, with recting one instance of his conduct, that shew'd him to be a person of no contemptible capacity. While he was captain of the *Algier-Rose*, his men, growing weary of their unsuccessful enterprise, made a mutiny, wherein they approached him on the quarter-deck with drawn swords in their hands, and required him to join with them in running away with the ship, to drive a trade of piracy on the South Seas. Captain Phips, though he had not so much of a weapon as an ox-goad, or a jaw-bone in his hands, yet like another Shamgar<sup>1</sup> or Samson, with a most undaunted fortitude, he rushed in upon them, and, with the blows of his bare hands, felled many of them and quelled all the rest. But this is not the instance which I intended. That which I intend is that (as it has been related unto me) one day while his frigate lay careening, at a desolate Spanish island, by the side of a rock, from whence they had laid a bridge to the shore, the men, whereof he had about an hundred, went, all but about eight or ten, to divert themselves, as they pretended, in the woods, where they all entered into an agreement, which they signed in a ring, that about seven a clock that evening they would seize the captain, and those eight or ten which they knew to be true unto him, and leave them to perish on this island, and so be gone away unto the South Sea to seek their fortune. Will the reader now imagine that Captain Phips, having advice of this plot but about an hour and half before it was to be put in execution, yet within two hours brought all these rogues down upon their knees to beg for their lives? But so it was! For these knaves, considering that they should want a carpenter with them in their villainous expedition, sent a messenger to fetch unto them the carpenter, who was then at work upon the vessel, and unto him they shewed their articles, telling him what he

must look for if he did not subscribe among them. The carpenter, being an honest fellow, did with much importunity prevail for one half hour's time to consider of the matter; and returning to work upon the vessel, with a spy by them set upon him, he feigned himself taken with a fit of the cholic, for the relief whereof he suddenly run unto the Captain in the great cabin for a dram; where, when he came, his business was only in brief to tell the captain of the horrible distress which he was fallen into; but the captain bid him as briefly return to the rogues in the woods, and sign their articles, and leave him to provide for the rest. The carpenter was no sooner gone, but Captain Phips, calling together the few friends (it may be seven or eight) that were left him aboard, whereof the gunner was one, demanded of them, whether they would stand by him in the extremity, which he informed them was now come upon him, whereto they replied, They would stand by him, if he could save them; and he answered, By the help of God he did not fear it. All their provisions had been carried ashore to a tent, made for that purpose there, about which they had placed several great guns to defend it, in case of any assault from Spaniards, that might happen to come that way. Wherefore Captain Phips immediately ordered those guns to be silently drawn and turned, and so pulling up the bridge, he charged his great guns aboard, and brought them to bear on every side of the tent. By this time the army of rebels comes out of the woods, but as they drew near to the tent of provisions, they saw such a change of circumstances that they cried out, "We are betrayed!" And they were soon confirmed in it, when they heard the Captain with a stern fury call to them, "Stand off, ye wretches, at your peril!" He quickly saw them cast into a more than ordinary confusion, when they saw him ready to fire his great guns upon them, if they offered one step further than he permitted them. And when he had signified unto them his resolve to abandon them unto all the desolation which they had purposed for him, he caused the bridge to be again laid, and his men begun to take the provisions aboard. When the wretches beheld what was coming upon them, they fell to

<sup>1</sup> Judges 3:31: "Shamgar the son of Anath, who smote of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad."

very humble entreaties; and at last fell down upon their knees, protesting that they never had any thing against him, except only his unwillingness to go away with the King's ship upon the South-Sea design: but upon all other accounts, they would chuse rather to live and die with him than with any man in the world, however, since they saw how much he was dissatisfied at it, they would insist upon it no more, and humbly begged his pardon. And when he judged that he had kept them on their knees long enough, he, having first secured their arms, received them aboard, but he immediately weighed anchor, and, arriving at Jamaica, he turned them off

Now, with a small company of other men he sailed from thence to Hispaniola,<sup>1</sup> where, by the policy of his address, he fished out of a very old Spaniard (or Portuguese) a little advice about the true spot where lay the wreck which he had been hitherto seeking, as unprosperously as the chemists have their aurific<sup>2</sup> stone, that it was upon a reef of shoals, a few leagues to the northward of Port de la Plata, upon Hispaniola, a port so called, it seems, from the landing of some of the shipwrecked company, with a boat full of plate, saved out of their sinking frigate; nevertheless, when he had searched very narrowly the spot whereof the old Spaniard had advised him, he had not hitherto exactly lit upon it. Such thorns did vex his affairs while he was in the *Rose* frigate, but none of all these things could retund<sup>3</sup> the edge of his expectations to find the wreck, with such expectations he returned then into England, that he might there better furnish himself to prosecute a new discovery, for though he judged he might, by proceeding a little further, have come at the right spot; yet he found his present company too ill a crew to be confided in.

So proper was his behavior that the best noblemen in the kingdom now admitted him into their conversation; but yet he was opposed by powerful enemies, that clogged his affairs with such demurrages, and such disappointments, as would have wholly discouraged his designs, if his patience had not been invincible. "He who can wait hath what he

desireth." Thus<sup>1</sup> his indefatigable patience, with a proportionable diligence, at length overcame the difficulties that had been thrown in his way; and prevailing with the Duke of Albemarle, and some other persons of quality, to fit him out, he set sail for the fishing-ground, which had been so well baited half an hundred years before; and as he had already discovered his capacity for business in many considerable actions, he now added unto those discoveries, by not only providing all, but also by inventing many of the instruments necessary to the prosecution of his intended fishery. Captain Phips arriving with a ship and a tender at Port de la Plata, made a stout canoe of a stately cotton-tree, so large as to carry eight or ten oars, for the making of which peraga<sup>2</sup> (as they call it) he did, with the same industry that he did every thing else, employ his own hand and adze, and endure no little hardship, lying abroad in the woods many nights together. Thus peraga, with the tender, being anchored at a place convenient, the peraga kept busking to and again,<sup>3</sup> but could only discover a reef of rising shoals thereabouts, called "The Boilers," which, rising to be within two or three foot of the surface of the sea, were yet so steep that a ship striking on them would immediately sink down, who could say how many fathom, into the ocean? Here they could get no other pay for their long peeping among the Boilers, but only such as caused them to think upon returning to their captain with the bad news of their total disappointment. Nevertheless, as they were upon the return, one of the men, looking over the side of the peraga, into the calm water, he spied a sea feather, growing, as he judged, out of a rock; whereupon they had one of their Indians to dive and fetch this feather, that they might, however, carry home something with them, and make, at least, as fair a triumph as Cahgula's. The diver, bringing up the feather, brought therewithal a surprising story, that he perceived a number of great guns in the watery world where he found his feather; the report of which great guns exceedingly astonished the whole company; and at once turned their despondencies

<sup>1</sup> Haiti    <sup>2</sup> having the power to transmute other substances into gold    <sup>3</sup> blunt, make dull

<sup>1</sup> "This" in text    <sup>2</sup> peraga    <sup>3</sup> cruising back and forth

for their ill success into assurances that they had now lit upon the true spot of ground which they had been looking for; and they were further confirmed in these assurances, when upon further diving, the Indian fetched up a sow, as they styled it, or a lump of silver worth perhaps two or three hundred pounds. Upon this they prudently buoyed the place, that they might readily find it again, and they went back unto their Captain, whom, for some while, they distressed with nothing but such bad news as they formerly thought they must have carried him. Nevertheless, they so slept in the sow of silver on one side under the table, where they were now sitting with the Captain, and hearing him express his resolutions to wait still patiently upon the providence of God under these disappointments, that when he should look on one side, he might see that odd thing before him. At last he saw it; seeing it, he cried out with some agony, "Why? What is this? Whence comes this?" And then, with changed countenances, they told him how and where they got it. "Then," said he, "thanks be to God! We are made", and so away they went, all hands to work; wherein they had this one further piece of remarkable prosperity, that whereas if they had first fallen upon that part of the Spanish wreck where the pieces of eight had been stowed in bags among the ballast, they had seen a more laborious, and less enriching time of it; now, most happily, they first fell upon that room in the wreck where the bullion had been stored up, and they so prospered in this new fishery, that in a little while they had, without the loss of any man's life, brought up thirty-two tons of silver; for it was now come to measuring of silver by tons. Besides which, one Adderly, of Providence, who had formerly been very helpful to Captain Phips in the search of this wreck, did, upon former agreement, meet him now with a little vessel here; and he, with his few hands, took up about six tons of silver; whereof, nevertheless, he made so little use, that in a year or two he died at Bermudas, and, as I have heard, he ran distracted some while before he died.

Thus did there once again come into the light of the sun a treasure which had been half an hundred years groaning under the waters;

and in this time there was grown upon the plate a crust like limestone, to the thickness of several inches; which crust, being broken open by irons contrived for that purpose, they knocked out whole bushels of rusty pieces of eight which were grown thereunto. Besides that incredible treasure of plate in various forms, thus fetched up, from seven or eight fathom under water, there were vast riches of gold, and pearls, and jewels, which they also lit upon; and indeed, for a more comprehensive invoice, I must but summarily say, "All that a Spanish frigate uses to be enriched withal." Thus did they continue fishing till, their provisions failing them, 'twas time to be gone, but before they went, Captain Phips caused Adderly and his folk to swear that they would none of them discover the place of the wreck, or come to the place any more till the next year, when he expected again to be there himself. And it was also remarkable that though the sows came up still so fast that on the very last day of their being there they took up twenty, yet it was afterwards found that they had in a manner wholly cleared that room of the ship where those massy things were stowed.

But there was one extraordinary distress which Captain Phips now found himself plunged into, for his men were come out with him upon seamen's wages, at so much per month, and when they saw such vast litters of silver sows and pigs, as they called them, come on board them at the Captain's call, they knew not how to bear it, that they should not share all among themselves, and be gone to lead "a short life and a merry," in a climate where the arrest of those that had hired them should not reach them. In this terrible distress he made his vows unto Almighty God, that if the Lord would carry him safe home to England, with what he had now given him, "to suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sands," he would forever devote himself unto the interests of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his people, especially in the country which he did himself originally belong unto. And he then used all the obliging arts imaginable to make his men true unto him, especially by assuring them that, besides their wages, they should have ample requitals

made unto them; which, if the rest of his employers would not agree unto, he would himself distribute his own share among them. Relying upon the word of one whom they had ever found worthy of their love, and of their trust, they declared themselves content; but still keeping a most careful eye upon them, he hastened back for England with as much money as he thought he could then safely trust his vessel withal; not counting it safe to supply himself with necessary provisions at any nearer port, and so return unto the wreck, by which delays he wisely feared lest all might be lost, more ways than one. Though he also left so much behind him that many from divers parts made very considerable voyages of gleanings after his harvest; which came to pass by certain Bermudians compelling of Adderly's boy, whom they spunted away with them, to tell them the exact place where the wreck was to be found.

Captain Phips now coming up to London in the year 1687 with near three hundred thousand pounds sterling aboard him, did acquit himself with such an exemplary honesty, that partly by his fulfilling his assurances to the seamen, and partly by his exact and punctual care to have his employers defrauded of nothing that might conscientiously belong unto them, he had less than sixteen thousand pounds left unto himself as an acknowledgment of which honesty in him, the Duke of Albemarle made unto his wife, whom he never saw, a present of a golden cup, near a thousand pound in value. The character of an honest man he had so merited in the whole course of his life, and especially in this last act of it, that this, in conjunction with his other serviceable qualities, procured him the favors of the greatest persons in the nation; and he that had been so diligent in his business must now stand before kings, and not stand before mean men.<sup>1</sup>

1694-1697

1702

### From the DIARY

Cotton Mather's diary is the revelation of a soul-searching discipline, including fasting, vigils, and protracted prayer. Vindications of illness or

death stirred him to unusual spiritual aliveness and self-scrutiny.

8 m.<sup>1</sup> Friday [October 30, 1702.] On this day my little daughter, Nibby, began to fall sick of the smallpox. The dreadful disease, which is raging in the neighborhood, is now got into my poor family. God prepare me, God prepare me, for what is coming upon me!

The child was favorably visited in comparison of what many are.

It becomes impossible for me to record much in these memorials, the vast numbers of the sick among my neighbors and the duties which I owe to the sick in my own family engrossing my time exceedingly.

It being impossible for me to visit the many scores of sick families in my neighborhood, and yet it being my desire to visit them as far as 'tis possible, I composed a sheet which I entitled, *Wholesome Words, or, A visit of Advice to Families Visited with Sickness*. I put myself to the small expense of printing it; and then dividing my flock into three parts, I singled out three honest men, unto whom I committed the care of lodging a sheet in every family, as fast as they should hear of any falling sick in it. The Lord makes thus my poor essay exceedingly acceptable and servicable.

The month of November coming on, I had on my mind a strong impression to look out some agreeable paragraph of scripture to be handled in my public ministry, while the two dreadful and mortal sicknesses of the smallpox and the scarlet fever should be raging among us. After earnest supplications to the Lord for his direction I used an action which I would not encourage ever to be used in any divinatorial way. I thought I would observe whether the first place that occurred at my opening of my Bible would prove suitable or no; or such as might carry any intimation of angelical direction in it. Unto my amazement, it proved the history of our Lord's curing the sick son of the nobleman, in the fourth chapter of *John*. I saw that the whole Bible afforded not a more agreeable or profitable paragraph. So I began a course of sermons upon it.

9 m. Saturday. [November 14.] The awful

<sup>1</sup>The 8th month (October) According to the Old Style calendar, the year began with March.

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 22:29

circumstances upon me, (and upon the town) caused me to lie in the dust this day with a secret prayer and fasting before the Lord.

In this month, my lovely consort again declines; and some latent mischief within her brings on a feebleness that gives us great apprehensions of a mortal issue.

9 m. Saturday. [November 21.] I obtained, I compelled, the leisure for another day of prayer with fasting in my study, to carry my distressed family unto the Lord

Humiliations are coming thick upon me!

My study is though a large, yet a warm chamber, (the hangings whereof are boxes with between two and three thousand books in them), and we are so circumstanced that my house, though none of the smallest, cannot afford a safe hospital now for my sick folks anywhere so well as there. So I resigned my study for an hospital to my little folks that are falling sick of a loathsome disease. God sanctified this to humble me for my not serving him as I should have done in my study, which provokes him to chase me out of it

9 m. [November 24.] My daughter Nanny was taken sick. She proved full and blind and very sore of the distemper

9 m. [November 27.] My son Increase was taken sick. He also proved pretty full and blind and sore, though not so bad as his sister

The little creatures keep calling for me so often to pray with them, that I can scarce do it less than ten or a dozen times in a day, besides what I do with my neighbors

But the most exquisite of my trials was the condition of my lovely consort. It now began to be hopeless

*Lord, if thy poor servant have any grace in him, it will now be tried unto the uttermost!*

How shall I glorify the Lord in the midst of these distresses and confusions? Truly, after my sorry manner I did set myself to do it.

I spent much time with my lovely consort. I prayed with her as agreeably as I could. I endeavored her most consummate preparation for the heavenly world by suitable questions and proposals. I comforted her with as lively discourses upon the glory of heaven whereto she was going, as I could make unto her. I disposed her and myself, all that I could, unto a glorious resignation.

At last the black day arrives: Tuesday, the first of December. I had never yet seen such a black day in all the time of my pilgrimage. The desire of my eyes is this day to be taken from me. Her death is lingering and painful. All the forenoon of this day she lies in the pangs of death, sensible, until the last minute or two before her final expiration.

I cannot remember the discourses that passed between us. Only her devout soul was full of satisfaction about her going to a state of blessedness with the Lord Jesus Christ, and as far as my distress would permit me, I studied how to confirm her satisfaction and consolation.

This I remember, that a little before she died I asked her to tell me faithfully what fault she had seen in my conversation that she would advise me to rectify. She replied (which I wondered at) that she knew of none, but that God had made what she had observed in my conversation exceedingly serviceable unto her, to bring her much nearer unto himself.

When I saw to what a point of resignation I was now called of the Lord I resolved, with his help therein, to glorify him. So, two hours before my lovely consort expired, I kneeled by her bedside, and I took into my two hands a dear hand, the dearest in the world. With her then in my hands, I solemnly and sincerely gave her up unto the Lord, and in token of my real resignation I gently put her out of my hands, and laid away a most lovely hand, resolving that I would never touch it any more!

This was the hardest and perhaps the bravest action that ever I did. She afterwards told me that she signed and sealed my act of resignation. And though, before that, she called for me continually, she after this never asked for me any more.

She continued until near two o'clock in the afternoon. And the last sensible word that she spoke, was to her weeping father, "Heaven, Heaven will make amends for all."

When she was expired, I immediately prayed with her father, and the other weeping people in the chamber, for the grace to carry it well under the present calamity, and I did consummate my resignation in terms as full of

glory to the wisdom and goodness and all-sufficiency of the Lord, as I could utter.

She lived with me just as many years as she lived in the world before she came to me, with an addition of the seven months, wherein her dying languishments were preparing me to part with her. When I had been married unto her just sixteen years, (and as near as I can recollect, on that very week, sixteen years, that I was married unto her) God began to take her from me. I then said unto my father, "I seem to feel in my mind, the bodings of a dark cloud hanging over my family." The cloud came on, and now, see what was in it!

On the Friday following, my lovely consort had a very honorable funeral

1702

1911

### From MANUDUCTIO AD MINISTERIUM

#### [On Ways to Do Good]

One of Cotton Mather's latest works, published only two years before his death, was *Manuductio ad Ministerium*, a sort of guidebook for young men about to enter the ministry. It is one of the most pleasing and readable of his books, in which he distills the mature judgment and experience of a long life of devoted service to religion and his fellow-men. Of special interest are his suggestions on ways of being useful, on college love affairs, on the arts, on literary style, and on not being over-expectant of gratitude from his parishioners.

My advice to you is, Begin betimes to take that noble question into consideration, What good may I be capable of doing in the world? Have stated and proper times for it, and these as often as may be, to consider on the question; and keep a record of your purposes. First, with an humble and mournful sense how much you want that wisdom, which is to find out well-advised inventions, look up to God your Saviour, that by Him (who is the wisdom of God) living in you and leading of you, you may obtain a fair view of the opportunities to do good which He has put into your hand, that they may not be a *price in the hand of a fool*<sup>1</sup>; and a clear view of the methods to

be taken that this good may be prosecuted and your desire sweetly accomplished. Then proceed and enquire.

Enquire first, What shall I do for myself, that I may myself improve in knowledge and goodness, and the ends of those means which the divine cultivation employs upon me?

Enquire next, What shall I do for my several relatives, my kindred according to the flesh, that I may prove a blessing in each of my relations? Take a catalogue of them, and successively bestow distinct thoughts upon them all.

Then go on to take some cognizance of the several societies to which you stand related, especially the church whereof you are a member, (and the college, if you belong to that!) yea, the town, and the land whereof you are an inhabitant.

Think, What good is to be proposed and promoted herel To what an extent, O dear son and pleasant child, may thy projections carry thee!

Particular persons in your neighborhood may now also be found out as objects that good may be done unto the poor for to be relieved; the sick for to be visited, the sad for to be comforted; and those that are out of the way, to be reclaimed from the error of their way. Many of those whom you have distinguished in thus doing of good unto them, you will find prove monsters of ingratitude. But let not this dishearten you. God is now trying of you, whether you will do good for the pure sake of good, and you will this way have recompences ascertained unto you, in the harvest, when whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

But, because your own capacities to do good may be greatly limited, you should also have a time to think. What good lying out of my reach may I see others capable of doing more than I? and hereupon become an humble adviser unto them. Yea, I could wish you would betimes make it a rule for your conduct, that you will, as far as you can, always endeavor a *profitable conversation*, and in every company think whether you may not with decency let fall some word which they may be the wiser or the better for; and every

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 17:16 "Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, seeing he hath no understanding?"

one go from you, *aut docet, aut melior*<sup>1</sup> for you.

Your opportunities to do good may at first be very small and under very narrow limitations. Nevertheless, I press you to begin betimes your enquiries after them and your actions upon them; and expect that, though the beginning be but small, the latter end shall greatly increase. That word, *habenti dabitur*,<sup>2</sup> will be remarkably and conspicuously fulfilled unto you, by the all-governing providence of Him who has all opportunities to do good, entirely at His disposal. Your circles will grow wider and wider, and anon expand unto dimensions beyond what at first you could have imagined. And I hope you will esteem your opportunities as your incomparable treasures. While others are hunting and grasping after the sordid wealth of this world, which will presently be found all vanity, vanity! you will reckon your advantages to promote the kingdom of God and the welfare of men, as much more valuable riches.

### [On Style in Writing]

There has been a great deal of ado about a style, so much that I must offer you my sentiments upon it. There is a way of writing wherein the author endeavors that the reader may have something to the purpose in every paragraph. There is not only a vigor sensible in every sentence, but the paragraph is embellished with profitable references, even to something beyond what is directly spoken. Formal and painful<sup>3</sup> quotations are not studied, yet all that could be learned from them is insinuated. The writer pretends not unto reading, yet he could not have writ as he does if he had not read very much in his time, and his composesures<sup>4</sup> are not only a cloth of gold but also stuck with as many jewels as the gown of a Russian ambassador. This way of writing has been decried by many, and is at this day more than ever so, for the same reason that, in the old story, the grapes were decried, that they were not ripe. A lazy, ignorant, conceited set of authors would persuade the whole tribe

to lay aside that way of writing, for the same reason that one would have persuaded his brethren to part with the encumbrance of their hushy tails.<sup>1</sup> But, however fashion and humor may prevail, they must not think that the club at their coffee-house is all the world, but there will always be those who will in this case be governed by indisputable reason, and who will think that the real excellency of a book will never lie in saying of little—that the less one has for his money in a book, 'tis really the more valuable for it, and that the less one is instructed in a book, and the more of superfluous margin and superficial harangue, and the less of substantial matter one has in it, the more 'tis to be accounted of. And if a more massy<sup>2</sup> way of writing be never so much disgusted<sup>3</sup> at this day, a better gust<sup>4</sup> will come on. . . .

After all, every man will have his own style, which will distinguish him as much as his gait, and if you can attain to that which I have newly described, but always writing so as to give an easy conveyance unto your ideas, I would not have you, by any scourging, be driven out of your gait. . . . However, since every man will have his own style, I would pray that we may learn to treat one another with mutual civilities and condescensions, and handsomely indulge one another in this, as gentlemen do in other matters.

### [On Popular Ingratitude]

. . . I am sorry that I must (but I must!) conclude my advice for your diligence in the discharge of the pastoral duties with a warning, that you must not wonder at it, if you find that you serve many ungrateful people, and may be many ways maltreated by them who are under the strongest obligations to support you, and reduced unto the humbling and creeping circumstances of a *res angusta domus*<sup>1</sup>: yea, be oppressed with grievous defraudations from them, whom God will many ways punish for their ingratitude. If it should be so, yet remember, you are in the service of a glorious Lord, who not only says, "I know

<sup>1</sup> either the wiser or the better    <sup>2</sup> to him that has shall be given    <sup>3</sup> abstruse, painfully sought out  
<sup>4</sup> compositions

<sup>1</sup> i.e., who persuaded the horses to become asses  
<sup>2</sup> substantial    <sup>3</sup> disliked    <sup>4</sup> taste    <sup>5</sup> a straitened situation

thy service," but orders those things to fall out, upon which He may with infinite pleasure also say, "I know thy patience." Be not now discouraged from still devoting yourself to the public and private labors of your ministry be wholly in them, and therein labor to overcome evil with good. Suffer anything, rather than in the methods of the law do that which will ruin the success of the gospel and utterly extinguish the hope of your doing any more good by your ministry among them. Cause them to feel that you are traveling with agony for the eternal salvation of them and theirs; and that the gaining of one soul to God by your ministry will be of more account

with you than any gain of this world, than all the wealth in the world. Be they never so unjust, yet nobly hold on raining the blessed showers of heaven upon them! Thus with a strong faith which gives glory to God, go on with a watchful, painful, faithful ministry, keeping your eye on the Sixth Chapter of *Matthew*, and relying on your Saviour for your subsistence and never fear! never fear! He will with strange interpositions of His providence, yea, with conspicuous and marvelous operations of the angelical ministry, send in seasonable supplies for you, and often make the season of them such as notably to add unto the comfort of them. . . .

1726

## 1652 ~ Samuel Sewall ~ 1730

OUR BEST and most intimate picture of life in the American colonies is found in the diary of Samuel Sewall. Sewall was important in his own day as a wealthy merchant and magistrate of Boston and only secondarily as a man of letters. Although he was born in England, of American parents, his education from the age of nine was received in Newbury, Massachusetts, and he was graduated from Harvard in 1671. Ten years later he began his long political career as manager of the printing press 1681-1684; representative in the General Court in 1683; and member of the Council 1684-1686 and again 1691-1725. During a journey to England on private business, he gave some help to Increase Mather in his efforts to recover the Massachusetts charter. In 1715 he was made judge of probate for Suffolk County, and from 1718 to 1728 he was chief justice of the Superior Court of Judicature. In spite of his lack of formal training in the law, he proved himself a wise and reasonable jurist.

In 1692 he was appointed one of the special commissioners to try witchcraft cases, in which capacity he participated in the sentencing of nineteen persons to be executed. Five years later, when the repentant colony appointed a fast day of atonement for any wrong that might have been done in the excitement of the witchcraft trials, Samuel Sewall stood up in the Old South Church while its minister read aloud his public confession of error and guilt. No other of the judges was moved to such penitence. Sewall also manifested sympathy for both Indians and slaves, and did what he could to humanize their treatment by his contemporaries.

In October, 1717, his first wife, with whom he had lived happily for forty years,



died, and he was subsequently married twice, to women of his own age. Anthologists in their selections have usually given exaggerated attention to the quests of the lonely old widower for a suitable mate.

Sewall's most important contribution to American literature is his *Diary*, first published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, one hundred and fifty years after his death. It covers the time from 1674 to 1729, except the years between 1677 and 1685. Like Pepys, with whom he is often compared, the judge did not intend that his records should be read by anyone else. They are totally without pretense in their picture of Puritan society, and of Sewall himself, mercenary but kindly, conventional but strong. Parrington, in discussing New England's transition out of Puritanism, aptly characterizes him as the first Yankee.

With the exception of *The Selling of Joseph* (1700), the most eloquent as well as the most important of early protests against slaveholding in America, Sewall's formal writings are masterpieces of labored and clumsy style, cluttered with quotations from and references to his voluminous if unliterary reading. Their concern is mostly with theological questions like the earthly location of the new kingdom of Christ or the existence of women's souls in heaven; and in few other writings of his time are scriptural texts more consistently relied upon as authority in all possible relations.

*The Diary of Samuel Sewall* was printed in the Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections*, 5th series, V-VII (1878-1882). Mark Van Doren edited an abridged edition, *Samuel Sewall's Diary*, in 1927. Sewall's *Letter Book* was issued in the Massachusetts Historical Society *Collections*, 6th series, I-II (1886-1888). *The Letters of Samuel Lee and Samuel Sewall Relating to New England and the Indians* was edited by G. L. Kittredge in the Colonial Society of Massachusetts *Publications*, XIV (1913). Among the books which Sewall himself issued in his own lifetime are *The Revolution in New England Justified* (with Edward Rawson, 1691), *Phaenomena Quaedam Apocalyptica* (1697), *The Selling of Joseph, a Memorial* (1700), *Proposals Touching the Accomplishment of Prophecies* (1713), and *A Memorial Relating to the Kennebeck Indians* (1721). Some of his verses are reproduced in Ola E. Winslow's *American Broadside Verse* (1930).

Besides N. H. Chamberlin's *Samuel Sewall and the World He Lived In* (1897), there are brief accounts by J. L. Sibley in *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, II (1881), and by James Truslow Adams in the *DAB*. For estimates of Sewall's position in his own time, see V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, I (1927), and H. W. Lawrence, "Samuel Sewall, Revealer of Puritan New England," in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXXIII, 20-37 (Jan., 1934).

#### From the DIARY<sup>1</sup>

APRIL 4, [1675] Sab. day I help preach for my Master<sup>2</sup> in the afternoon. Being afraid to

<sup>1</sup> Sewall's spelling and abbreviations have been preserved in this selection.

<sup>2</sup> Sewall, then a candidate for the ministry, was assisting his former tutor, Rev. Thomas Parker (1605-1677), clergyman at Newbury, Mass.

look on the glass,<sup>1</sup> ignorantly and unwillingly I stood two hours and a half.

Jan. 30 [1677]. Sent a letter to Cousin Quinsey, which enclosed a piece of gold that cost me 23<sup>s</sup>. Gave the letter to Mr. Josson [Jesson]. In it ordered to buy 2 pair silk stockings, pink colored, black, 1 pair tabby bodies,

<sup>1</sup> hourglass

cloth-coloured,  $\frac{1}{2}$  wide and long wasted; also Turkish *Alcoran*, 2<sup>d</sup> hand, Map of London. Sent him a copy of verses made on Mr. Reynor.<sup>1</sup>

March 16. Dr. Alcock dyes about midnight. Note, Mrs. Williams told us presently after duties how dangerously ill he was, and to get John to go for his grandmother. I was glad of that information, and resolved to goe and pray earnestly for him, but going into the kitchen, fell into discourse with Tim about mettals, and so took up the time. The Lord forgave me and help me not to be so slack for time to come, and so easy to disregard and let dye so good a resolution Dr Alcock<sup>2</sup> was 39 years old

July 8. New Meeting House *mane*<sup>3</sup> In sermon time there came in a female Quaker, in a canvas frock, her hair disshevelled and loose like a periwigg, her face as black as ink, led by two other Quakers, and two other followed. It occasioned the greatest and most amazing uproar that I ever saw *Isaiah* I 12, 14

Thorsday, Nov<sup>r</sup> 12. . . After, the ministers of this town come to the Court and complain against a dancing master who seeks to set up here and hath mixt dances, and his time of meeting is Lecture-Day, and 'tis reported he should say that by one play he could teach more divinity than Mr Willard or the Old Testament. Mr. Moodey said 'twas not a time for N.E. to dance Mr Mather struck at the root, speaking against mixt dances

Monday, Decemb<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>. About one in the night my wife is brought to bed of a son, of which Mother Hull brings me the first news Mrs Weeden midwife.

Sabbath-day, Decemb<sup>r</sup>. 13<sup>th</sup>. Mr Willard baptizeth my son lately born, whom I named Henry. David Stoddard, the son of Mr Simeon Stoddard, was baptized next, and then several other grown children Nurse Hill came in before the Psalm was sung, and yet the child was fine and quiet. Mr. Willard preached from *John* 15<sup>th</sup>, 8. "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, so shall ye be my

disciples". which is the first sermon my little son hath been present at.

Satterday, Dec. 19. Mr. Willard prays with my little Henry, being very ill.

Sabbath-day, Dec. 20. Send notes to Mr. Willard and Mr. Moodey to pray for my child Henry.

Monday, about four in the morn the faint and moaning noise of my child forces me up to pray for it.

21. Monday even, Mr Moodey calls. I get him to go up and pray with my extream sick son.

Tuesday Morn, Dec 22 Child makes no noise save by a kind of snoring as it breathed, and as it were slept.

Read the 16<sup>th</sup> of the First *Chron.* in the family Having read to my wife and nurse out of *John*, the Fourteenth Chapter fell now in course, which I read and went to prayer. By that time had done, could hear little breathing, and so about sun-rise, or little after, he fell asleep, I hope in Jesus, and that a mansion was ready for him in the Father's House. Died in Nurse Hill's lap. Nurse Hill washes and layes him out. because our private Meeting hath a day of prayer tomorrow, Thorsday Mr Willard's Lecture, and the child dying after sunrise (wether cloudy), have determined to bury on Thorsday after Lecture The Lord sanctify his dispensation, and prepare me and mine for the coming of our Lord, in whatsoever way it be. Mr Tho. Oakes our physician for this child Read the 16<sup>th</sup> Chap of the First *Chronicles* in the family

Thorsday, Dec<sup>r</sup>. 24<sup>th</sup>. We follow little Henry to his grave. Governour and Magistrates of the County here, 8 in all, beside my self, eight ministers, and several persons of note. Mr. Phillips of Rowley here I led Sam, then Cous. Savage led Mother, and cousin Dummer led Cous Quinsey's wife, he not well. Midwife Weeden and Nurse Hill carried the corps by turns, and so by men in its chesnut coffin 'twas set into a grave (the tomb full of water) between 4 and 5. At Lecture the 21 Psalm was sung from 8<sup>th</sup> to the end. The Lord humble me kindly in respect of all my enmity against Him, and let his breaking my image in my son be a means of it Considerable snow this night . . .

<sup>1</sup> Sewall was continually purchasing books and passing them on to his friends <sup>2</sup> Joseph Alcock, great-grandfather of Louisa May Alcott <sup>3</sup> in the morning

Dec. 25.<sup>1</sup> Friday. Carts come to town and shops open as is usual. Some somehow observe the day; but are vexed I believe that the body of the people profane it, and blessed be God no authority yet to compell them to keep it. A great snow fell last night so this day and night very cold

Friday, Augt. 20 [1686] Read the 143, 144 Psalms *mane*, and Sam read the 10<sup>th</sup> of Jeremiah. I was and am in great exercise about the Cross to be put into the colours,<sup>2</sup> and afraid if I should have a hand in 't whether it may not hinder my entrance into the Holy Land

Ap. 2, 1688. Mr Robert Sanderson rides with me to Neponset and gives me livery and seisin of his 8<sup>th</sup> of the Powder-Mill Stream, dwelling-house and land on each side the river, Mr Jn<sup>o</sup> Fayerweather, Desire Clap, and Walter Everenden, witnesses, having the deed there and exhibiting it, when he gave me turf, twigg, and splinter.<sup>3</sup> Mr Thacher's son, Tho, dies this morn. Lodge at Unkle Quinsey's with Cous Dan<sup>l</sup> Gookin, who has a son born last Saturday

Sabbath, Dec. 2,<sup>4</sup> goe with our fore courses, and just before night hoist the top-sail, sailing East-N.-E. Read out of Dr Preston and Manton, prayed and sung Psalms

Monday, Dec 3, calm in morn for some hours, then a South-west wind and top-sails out. Rain at night. Reef the mainsail because now the wind very high. Caught two petterils<sup>5</sup> which Mr. Clark intends to preserve alive. Note, my Erasmus was quite loosened out of the binding by the breaking of the water into cabbins when it did. Was comforted in the even by reading the 4, 5, 6, 7 verses especially of the *Ephesians*. About 8 at night the Mate tells me he saw three corpossants,<sup>6</sup> upon the top of each mast one.

<sup>1</sup> Christmas was not generally observed in New England before the middle of the nineteenth century, and until after the Revolution it was regarded as a Romish holiday. <sup>2</sup> The Calvinist Puritans of New England were greatly concerned with regard to the insertion of St. George's Cross in the national colors, owing to its association in their minds with the Catholic reverence for the Cross (cf. Hawthorne's "Endicott and the Red Cross"). <sup>3</sup> an ancient ritual accompanying the transfer of land in fee simple

<sup>4</sup> Sewall sailed for England, 1688, and arrived in Boston on the return voyage, Nov. 29, 1689. <sup>5</sup> petrels <sup>6</sup> corpossants, globular lights sometimes seen at night on a spar or yard of a ship, also called St. Elmo's fire

Tuesday, Dec. 4, *mane*, a violent North-East storm rises, so all sails taken in and by: very troublesome by reason of the frequent seas shipt and throwing the things in the cabbins into confusion. Mrs. Marcy's chest broken and her things powred out. I put on a clean shurt this morn. Can't dress virtually to day.

Wednesday, Dec. 5, wether is moderated: but the wind so contrary that we sailed E.S.E. and South-East.

Thursday, Xr<sup>1</sup> 6<sup>th</sup>, wether is comfortable, but wind, E N E, so we sail N. or N and by West. Mrs. Baxter is taken ill with a flux. Kill a shoat.

Friday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, very fair day. sail N. East. Breakfast on one of my wives plum cakes. Read Dr. Preston, *Saints Support of Sorrowful Sinners*. One of the geese dyes yesterday, or to day Mrs. Baxter is better.

Friday, Dec. 21. Little wind and that is Northerly. See many porpuses. I lay a [wager] with Mr. Newgate that shall not see any part of Great Britain by next Saturday seint sunset. Stakes are in Dr. Clark's hand. In the night wind at North-East.

Jan. 12 [1689]. Meet with a pink<sup>2</sup> 14 days from Liverpool tells us Prince of Aurange landed about the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov in Torbay, with 50 thousand men, six hundred ships: sea-commanders all yielded to him: no bloud shed. King and Prince of Wales gone to France somewhat privately. Bought three cheeses of him. He sent us some bottles of very good beer, and we him one of my bottles of brandy. About 12 o'clock the wind springs up fair, and about 6 in the even we take our leave of Beachey. Saith the occasion of Prince's coming in, that apprehends King James has no legitimate son, that that of Pr. Wales is a cheat. Told us there were Englishmen found dead, drowned, tied back to back: so put us in great fear, because he intimated as if French men of war were cruising with English commissions

Monday, March 18. Went and saw the Jews burying place at Mile-End. Some bodies were laid East and West; but now all are ordered to be laid North and South. Many tombs. En-

<sup>1</sup> i.e., December <sup>2</sup> a coasting vessel built with a narrow stern

gravings are Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, English, sometimes on the same stone. Part of the ground is improv'd as a garden, the dead are carried through the keeper's house. First tomb is abt the year 1659. Brick wall built abt part. Ont's two sides 5444, Christ 1684, Tamuz 21, June 23, as I remember.—I told the keep<sup>r</sup> afterwards wisht might meet in Heaven. He answerd, "And drink a glass of beer together," which we were then doing.

May 18, goe to Hampton Court<sup>1</sup> in company of Capt. Hutchinson and Jo. Appleton; Mr. Mather, Sir Sam Tomson, Mr. Whiting, and Mr. Joseph Tomson ridd in another Coach Cost 21<sup>s</sup> apiece, besides money to the drivers. Were dismissed *sine die*. Mr. Ward and Hook our council. Entertain Mr. Humphrys too. Just now, about, a virulent libel comes out against N.E., the day Mr. Wharton was burned

July 8. Went with Mr. Brattle and swam in the Thames, went off from the Temple Stairs, and had a wherry to wait on us: I went in in my drawers I think it hath been healthfull and refreshing to me

Sabbath, Jan. 12 [1690] Richard Dumer, a flourishing youth of 9 years old, dies of the small pocks I tell Sam of it and what need he had to prepare for death, and therefore to endeavour really to pray when he said over the Lord's Prayer He seem'd not much to mind, eating an apple; but when he came to say "Our father," he burst out into a bitter cry, and when I askt what was the matter and he could speak, he burst out into a bitter cry, and said he was afraid he should die I pray'd with him, and read Scriptures comforting against death, as, "O death where is thy sting," &c. All things yours. Life and immortality brought to light by Christ, &c. 'Twas at noon.

Feb 8 and 9<sup>th</sup>, Schenectady, a village 20 miles above Albany, destroy'd by the French 60 men, women, and children murder'd. Women with child ripp'd up, children had their brains dash'd out. Were surprised about 11 or 12 a'clock Satterday night, being divided, and secure.

<sup>1</sup> Sewall's voyage to England was undertaken in company with the Rev Increase Mather, in the attempt to secure a new charter favorable to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Augt. 19<sup>th</sup>, 1692. . . . Thus day<sup>1</sup> George Burrough, John Willard, Jn<sup>o</sup> Procter, Martha Carrier, and George Jacobs were executed at Salem, a very great number of spectators being present. Mr. Cotton Mather was there, Mr. Sims, Hale, Noyes, Chuever, &c. All of them said they were innocent, Carrier and all. Mr. Mather says they all died by a righteous sentence Mr. Burrough by his speech, prayer, protestation of his innocence, did much move unthinking persons, which occasions their speaking hardly concerning his being executed.

Aug<sup>4</sup> 25 Fast at the old [First] Church, respecting the witchcraft, drought, &c

Monday, Sept. 19 About noon, at Salem, Giles Corey was pressed to death for standing mute, much pains was used with him two days, one after another, by the Court and Capt. Gardner of Nantucket who had been of his acquaintance but all in vain.

Nov 6. Joseph threw a knop of brass and hit his sister Betty on the forehead so as to make it bleed and swell, upon which, and for his playing at prayer-time, and eating when Return Thanks, I whipt him pretty smartly When I first went in (call'd by his grandmother) he sought to shadow and hide himself from me behind the head of the cradle which gave me the sorrowfull remembrance of Adam's carriage

6<sup>th</sup> day, Dec<sup>r</sup>. 25, 1696 We bury our little daughter In the chamber, Joseph in course reads *Ecclesiastes* 3<sup>d</sup>, a time to be born and a time to die—Elisabeth [reads] *Rev.* 22. Halleluiah, the 38<sup>th</sup> Psalm I speak to each, as God helped, to our mutual comfort, I hope. I order'd Sam. to read the 102 Psalm. Elisha Cooke, Edw. Hutchinson, John Baily, and Josia Willard bear my little daughter to the tomb

Note. 'Twas wholly dry, and I went at noon to see in what order things were set, and there I was entertain'd with a view of, and converse with, the coffins of my dear Father Hull, Mother Hull, Cousin Quinsey, and my six children: for the little posthumous was now took up and set in upon that that stands on John's: so are three, one upon another twice, on the bench at the end My Mother ly's on a lower bench, at the end, with head to her

<sup>1</sup> in margin, "Dolefull Witchcraft!"

husband's head and I order'd little Sarah to be set on her grandmother's feet 'Twas an awfull yet pleasing treat; having said, "The Lord knows who shall be brought hether next," I came away.

[Jan. 14, 1697] Copy of the Bill<sup>1</sup> I put up on the Fast day; giving it to Mr Willard as he pass'd by, and standing up at the reading of it, and bowing when finished, in the afternoon.

Samuel Sewall, sensible of the reiterated strokes of God upon himself and family, and being sensible that as to the guilt contracted upon the opening of the late Commission of Oyer and Terminer at Salem (to which the order for this day relates) he is, upon many accounts, more concerned than any that he knows of, desires to take the blame and shame of it, asking pardon of men, and especially desiring prayers that God, who has an unlimited authority, would pardon that sin and all other his sins, personal and relative, and according to his infinite benignity, and sovereignty, not visit the sin of him, or of any other, upon himself or any of his, nor upon the Land but that he would powerfully defend him against all temptations to sin, for the future, and vouchsafe him the efficacious, saving conduct of his Word and Spirit

May 1, 1697 The first sheet of *Phaenomena Apocalypica*<sup>2</sup> is wrought off

Fourth-day, June 19 [1700] Having been long and much dissatisfied with the trade of fetching negroes from Guinea, at last I had a strong inclination to write something about it, but it wore off At last reading Bayne[s], *Ephes.* about servants, who mentions blackamoors, I began to be uneasy that I had so long neglected doing any thing When I was thus thinking, in came Bro<sup>r</sup> Belknap to shew me a petition he intended to present to the Gen<sup>l</sup> Court for the freeing a negro and his wife, who were unjustly held in bondage And

<sup>1</sup> Brief in which he confesses his error in the condemning of witches at Salem. For the remaining thirty-one years of his life he set aside an annual day of meditation fasting and prayer as penance for his error

<sup>2</sup> English title, *A Description of the New Heaven as it makes to those who stand upon the New Earth*, a pamphlet in which Sewall on the basis of Scripture texts attempted to prove that America in the latitude of Mexico City would be the seat of the New Heaven upon Earth.

there is a motion by a Boston Committee to get a law that all importers of negroes shall pay 40<sup>s</sup> per head, to discourage the bringing of them And Mr. C. Mather resolves to publish a sheet to exhort masters to labour their conversion Which makes me hope that I was call'd of God to write this apology for them; let his blessing accompany the same!<sup>1</sup>

Oct<sup>r</sup> 20 [1701] Mr. Cotton Mather came to Mr Wilkins's shop, and there talked very sharply against me as if I had used his father worse than a Neger, spake so loud that people in the street might hear him. Then went and told Sam, that one pleaded much for negroes, and he had used his father worse than a negro, and told him that was his father I had read in the morn Mr Dod's saying, "Sanctified afflictions are good promotions." I found it now a cordial And this caus'd me the rather to set under my father and mother's epitaph,—*Psal.* 27. 10.<sup>2</sup>

Oct<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>3</sup> I sent Mr. Increase Mather a hanch of very good venison, I hope in that I did not treat him as a negro

Thorsday, Oct<sup>r</sup> 23 Mr Increase Mather said at Mr Wilkins's, "If I am a servant of Jesus Christ, some great judgment will fall on Capt. Sewall, or his family"

Oct<sup>r</sup> 25. This day in the morn, I got Mr Moody to copy out my speech, and gave it to Mr Wilkins that all might see what was the ground of Mr. Mather's anger.

Writ out another and gave it to Joshua Gee I perceive Mr Wilkins carried his to Mr Mathers. They seem to grow calm

Jan<sup>y</sup>. 6, 1702, Nurse Hill watch'd last night. Wife had a comfortable night.

... What through my wives many illnesses, more than ordinary, her fall upon the stairs about 5 weeks before, from which time she kept her chamber, her thoughtfulness between whiles whether she were with child or no; her fears what the issue would be, and the mis-giving of our unbelieving hearts, God had been wonderfully mercifull to us in her comfortable delivery, which I desire to have recorded.

Note This is the thirteenth child that I

<sup>1</sup> See Sewall's *The Selling of Joseph*, below  
<sup>2</sup> "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up"  
<sup>3</sup> Apparently a retrospective entry on Sewall's part

have offered up to God in baptism; my wife having born me seven sons and seven daughters. I have named this little daughter Judith, in remembrance of her honoured and beloved grandmother Mrs. *Judith Hull*. And it may be my dear wife may now leave off bearing.

Febr<sup>y</sup>. 21. Capt. Tim<sup>e</sup> Clark tells me that a line drawn to the comet strikes just upon Mexico, spake of a revolution there, how great a thing it would be. Said one Whitehead told him of the magnificence of the city, that there were in it 1500 coaches drawn with mules. This blaze had much put me in mind of Mexico, because we must look toward Mexico to view it. Capt. Clark drew a line on his globe. Our thoughts being thus confer'd, and found to jump,<sup>1</sup> makes it to me remarkable. I have long pray'd for Mexico, and of late in those words, that God would open the Mexican Fountain

Dec<sup>r</sup> 30, 1702 I was weigh'd in Col. Byfield's scales weight one hundred one half one quarter wanting 3 pounds, i e 193 pounds net. Col. Byfield weighed sixty three pounds more than I had only my close coat on. The Lord add, or take away from this our corporeal weight, so as shall be most advantageous for our spiritual growth. [in margin] July 31 1721 I weighed 228  $\text{L}$  p. Cous. Sam<sup>l</sup> Sewall's scales

March, 16, 1703 Though all things look horribly winterly by reason of a great storm of snow, hardly yet over, and much on the ground yet the robbins cheerfully utter their notes this morn. So should we patiently and cheerfully sing the praises of God, and hope in his mercys, though storm'd by the last efforts of Antichrist

Second-day, Jan<sup>y</sup> 24, 1704 I paid Capt. Belchar  $\text{£}8-15-0$ . Took 24<sup>s</sup> in my pocket, and gave my wife the rest of my cash  $\text{£}4-3-8$ , and tell her she shall now keep the cash; if I want I will borrow of her. She has a better faculty than I at managing affairs. I will assist her, and will endeavour to live upon my salary, will see what it will doe. The Lord give his blessing

*Feria Sexta*, Junij 30, 1704. . . After dinner, about 3 p. m. I went to see the execution.

<sup>1</sup> agree (on the basis of certain verses in *Revelations*)

By the way (Cous. Ephr. Savage with me) James Hawkins certifies us of Madam Paiges death; he was to make a tomb. Many were the people that saw upon Broughton's Hill. But when I came to see how the river was cover'd with people, I was amazed. Some say there were 100 boats 150 boats and canoes, saith Cousin Moody of York. He told<sup>1</sup> them Mr. Cotton Mather came with Capt. Quelch and six others for execution from the prison to Scarlet's Wharf, and from thence in the boat to the place of execution about the midway between Hanson's Point and Broughton's Warehouse. Mr. Bridge was there also. When the scaffold was hoisted to a due height, the seven malefactors went up; Mr. Mather pray'd for them standing upon the boat. Ropes were all fasten'd to the gallows (save King, who was reprieved). When the scaffold was let to sink, there was such a screech of the women that my wife heard it sitting in our entry next the orchard, and was much surprised at it, yet the wind was sou-west. Our house is a full mile from the place.

Tuesday, Apr. 23, [1706] Gov<sup>r</sup> comes to town guarded by the troops with their swords drawn; dines at the Dragon, from thence proceeds to the Townhouse; illuminations at night. Capt. Pelham tells me several wore crosses in their hats, which makes me resolve to stay at home (though Maxwell was at my house and spake to me to be at the Council-Chamber at 4 p. m.), because to drinking healths, now the keeping of a day to fictitious St. George is plainly set on foot. It seems Capt. Dudley's men wore crosses. Somebody had fasten'd a cross to a dog's head, Capt. Dudley's boat-swain seeing him, struck the dog, and then went into the shop, next where the dog was, and struck down a carpenter, one Davis, as he was at work not thinking anything. Boat-swain and the other with him were fined 10<sup>s</sup> each for breach of the peace, by Jer. Dummer Esq<sup>r</sup>: pretty much blood was shed by means of this bloody cross, and the poor dog a sufferer.

June 16 [1707]. My house was broken open in two places, and about twenty pounds worth of plate stolen away, and some linen, my spoon, and knife, and neckcloth was taken. I

<sup>1</sup> counted

said, "Is not this an answer of prayer?"<sup>1</sup> Jane came up, and gave us the alarm betime in the morn I was helped to submit to Christ's stroke, and say, "Wellcome, Christ!"

April 3 [1711]. I dine with the Court at Pullin's. Mr. Attorney treats us at his house with excellent pippins, anchovas, olives, nuts. I said I should be able to make no judgment on the pippins without a review, which made the company laugh. Spake much of negroes, I mention'd the problem, whether should be white after the Resurrection Mr Bolt took it up as absurd, because the body should be void of all colour, spake as if it should be a spirit I objected what Christ said to his Disciples after the Resurrection He said twas not so after his Ascension

Nov<sup>r</sup> 22 [1712] My desire of seeing foreign countries was incomparably abated, by considering that at home I might visit God, in whom all perfection of goodness is centred

Dec<sup>r</sup> 23 [1714] Dr. C. Mather preaches excellently from Ps 37. "Trust in the Lord" &c, only spake of the sun being in the centre of our system I think it inconvenient to assert such problems

July 6 [1715] This day it is fifty four years since I first was brought ashore to Boston near where Scarlet's Wharf now is, July 6, 1661, Lord's Day The Lord help me to redeem the time which passes so swiftly. I was then a poor little school-boy of nine years and  $\frac{1}{2}$  old

Lord's Day, Jan<sup>r</sup> 15 [1716]. An extraordinary cold storm of wind and snow. Blows much worse as coming home at noon, and so holds on. Bread was frozen at the Lord's Table Mr. Pemberton administered Came not out to the afternoon exercise Though twas so cold, yet John Tuckerman was baptised At six a-clock my ink freezes so that I can hardly write by a good fire in my wive's chamber. Yet was very comfortable at meeting. *Laus Deo.*

I essay'd, June 22, to prevent Indians and Negros being rated with horses and hogs; but could not prevail Col. Thaxter brought it back, and gave as a reason of the non-agree-

ment, they were just going to make a new valuation.

7<sup>th</sup> day, 8<sup>r</sup> 19 [1717]. Call'd Dr. C. Mather to pray, which he did excellently in the dining room, having suggested good thoughts to my wife before he went down. After, Mr. Wadsworth pray'd in the chamber when 'twas suppos'd my wife took little notice. About a quarter of an hour past four, my dear wife expired in the afternoon, whereby the chamber was fill'd with a flood of tears. God is teaching me a new lesson. to live a widower's life Lord help me to learn; and be a sun and shield to me, now so much of my comfort and defense are taken away.

Feb<sup>r</sup>. 6 [1718] This morning wandering in my mind whether to live a single or a married life; I had a sweet and very affectionat meditation concerning the Lord Jesus. Nothing was to be objected against his person, parentage, relations, estate, house, homel Why did I not resolutely, presently close with him! And I cry'd mightily to God that He would help me so to doel

Sept<sup>r</sup> 2 [1719]. Visit Mrs. Tilley and speak with her in her chamber, ask her to come and dwell at my house. She expresses her unworthiness of such a thing with much respect. I tell her of my going to Bristol I would have her consider of she answered she would have me consider of it.<sup>1</sup>

7<sup>r</sup>. 21 I gave Mrs Tilley a little booke entitled *Ornaments for the daughters of Zion* I gave it to my dear wife Aug<sup>l</sup> 28, 1702.

8<sup>r</sup>. 1, [1720]. Satterday, I dine at Mr Stoddard's from thence I went to Madam Winthrop's<sup>2</sup> just at 3. Spake to her, saying, my loving wife died so soon and suddenly, 'twas hardly convenient for me to think of marrying again, however I come to this resolution, that I would not make my court to any person without first consulting with her Had a pleasant discourse about 7 single persons sitting in the fore-seat 7<sup>r</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, viz. Mad<sup>m</sup> Rebekah Dudley, Catharine Winthrop, Bridget Usher, Deliverance Legg, Rebekah Loyd, Lydia Col-

<sup>1</sup> A few entrees earlier Sewall had asked God to quicken his spiritual life, evidently he expected this to come about by some calamity being visited upon him

<sup>1</sup> On October 30, 1719, Sewall was married to Mrs. Tilley, who died May 26, 1720 <sup>2</sup> Mrs. Katherine (Brattle) Winthrop, born 1664, first married John Eyre, secondly, Wadstall Winthrop, and became a widow again in 1717 She was now 56 and Sewall 68.

man, Elizabeth Bellingham. She propounded one and another for me; but none would do, said Mrs. Loyd was about her age.

8<sup>th</sup>. 21, Friday. My son, the minister, came to me p. m. by appointment, and we pray one for another in the Old Chamber<sup>1</sup>; more especially respecting my courtship. About 6 a-clock I go to Madam Winthrop's, Sarah told me her mistress was gon out, but did not tell me whither she went. She presently order'd 10 she said so from the beginning; could not be so far from her children, the Lecture Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single life was better than a married I answer'd that was for the present distress Said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly I said, "You are the fitter to make me a wife." If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my rashness in making more haste than good speed However, considering the supper, I desired her to be withun, next Monday night, if we liv'd so long. Assented She charg'd me with saying that she must put away Juno if she came to me I utterly deny'd it, it never came into my heart, yet she insisted upon it, saying it came in upon discourse about the Indian woman that obtained her freedom this Court About 10 I said I would not disturb the good orders of her house, and came away She not seeming pleas'd with my coming away Spake to her about David Jef- 30 fries, had not seen him.

I rose up at 11 a-clock to come away, saying I would put on my coat She offer'd not to help me. I pray'd her that Juno<sup>4</sup> might light me home, she open'd the shutter, and said twas pretty light abroad, Juno was weary and gon to bed So I came hom by star-light as well as I could At my first coming in, I gave Sarah five shillings I writ Mr Eyre his name in his book with the date Octob<sup>r</sup>. 21, 1720 It cost me 8<sup>s</sup>. Jehovah prehl<sup>5</sup> Madam told me she had 40 visited M Mico, Wendell, and W<sup>m</sup> Clark of the South [Church].

Nov<sup>r</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Friday Went again about 7 a-clock, found there Mr John Walley and his wife sat discoursing pleasantly I shew'd them Isaac Moses's<sup>7</sup> writing. Madam W. served comferts<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Sewall, Jr., whose marriage to a daughter of Governor Dudley turned out unhappily <sup>2</sup> *Bowels opened; or a Discovery of the Union between Christ and the Church* <sup>3</sup> Stepmom of Madam Winthrop <sup>4</sup> an Indian servant <sup>5</sup> God will provide. <sup>6</sup> an Indian <sup>7</sup> comfit, a dry sweetmeat

to us. After a-while a table was spread, and supper was set. I urg'd Mr. Walley to crave a blessing; but he put it upon me. About 9, they went away. I ask'd Madam what fashioned necklace I should present her with. She said, "None at all." I ask'd her whereabouts we left off last time, mention'd what I had offer'd to give her, ask'd her what she would give me. She said she could not change her condition 10 she said so from the beginning; could not be so far from her children, the Lecture Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single life was better than a married I answer'd that was for the present distress Said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly I said, "You are the fitter to make me a wife." If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my rashness in making more haste than good speed However, considering the supper, I desired her to be withun, next Monday night, if we liv'd so long. Assented She charg'd me with saying that she must put away Juno if she came to me I utterly deny'd it, it never came into my heart, yet she insisted upon it, saying it came in upon discourse about the Indian woman that obtained her freedom this Court About 10 I said I would not disturb the good orders of her house, and came away She not seeming pleas'd with my coming away Spake to her about David Jef- 30 fries, had not seen him.

Monday, Nov<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> My son pray'd in the Old Chamber Our time had been taken up by son and daughter Cooper's visit, so that I only read the 130<sup>th</sup> and 143 Psalm Twas on the account of my courtship I went to Mad Winthrop, found her rocking her little Katee in the cradle I excus'd my coming so late (near eight) She set me an arm'd chair and cushion, and so the cradle was between her arm'd chair and mine Gave her the remnant of my almonds; she did not eat of them as before, but laid them away, I said I came to enquire whether she had alter'd her mind since Friday, or remained of the same mind still. She said, "Thereabouts." I told her I loved her, and was so fond as to think that she loved me She said had a great respect for me I told her, I had made her an offer, 50 without asking any advice; she had so many to advise with, that twas a hindrance The fire



was come to one short brand besides the block, which brand was set up in end, at last it fell to pieces, and no recruit was made. She gave me a glass of wine. I think I repeated again that I would go home and bewail my rashness in making more haste than good speed. I would endeavour to contain myself, and not go on to solicit her to do that which she could not consent to. Took leave of her. As came down the steps she bid me have a care. Treated me 10 courteously. Told her she had enter'd the 4th year of her widowhood. I had given her the *News-Letter* before. I did not bid her draw off her glove as sometime I had done. Her dress was not so clean as sometime it had been. Jehovah prehl!

March 5 [1721] Lord's Day, serene, and good but very cold, yet had a comfortable opportunity to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Mr Prince, p. m., preach'd a funeral sermon from Psal. 90. 10. Gave Capt. Hill a good character. 20 Just as I sat down in my seat, one of my fore-teeth in my under jaw came out, and I put it in my pocket. This old servant and daughter of musick leaving me, does thereby give me warning that I must shortly resign my head the Lord help me to do it cheerfully!

October 19, 1728. Seeing this to be the same day of the week and month that the wife of my youth expired eleven years agoe, it much 30 affected me. I writ to my dear son, Mr. Joseph Sewall, of it, desiring him to come and dine with me, or however that he would call some time to join my condolence. He came about noon and made an excellent prayer in the East Chamber. *Laus Deo*.

*Feria Secunda*, Octob<sup>r</sup> 13, 1729. Judge Davenport comes to me between 10 and 11 a-clock in the morning and speaks to me on behalf of Mr. Addington Davenport, his eldest 40 son, that he might have liberty to wait upon Jane Hirst, now at my house, in way of courtship. He told he would deal by him as his eldest son, and more than so. Inten'd to build a house where his uncle Addington dwelt, for him, and that he should have his pue in the Old Meetinghouse. I gave him my hand at his going away and acknowledged his respect to me and granted his desire. He said Madam Addington would wait upon me.

His Honour the Lieut. Governour visited

me quickly after, and acquainted me that he design'd for Newbury in a day or two, to stay for a week or fortnight.

I inform'd his Honor of what Mr. Davenport had been about. His Honor approved it much, commended the young man and reckon'd it a very good match.<sup>1</sup>

1878-1882

### From THE SELLING OF JOSEPH

In this early attack upon slaveholding, Sewall anticipates nearly all the arguments of the later antislavery writers, moral, religious, social, and economic. For his consistent interest in enslaved Negroes and Indians, see the entries for June 19, 1700, April 3, 1711, and June 22, 1716, in the selections from the *Diary* above.

[ORIGINALLY] and naturally there is no such thing as slavery. Joseph was rightfully no more a slave to his brethren, than they were to him, and they had no more authority to sell him than they had to slay him. And if they had nothing to do to sell him, the Ishmaelites bargaining with them, and paying down twenty pieces of silver, could not make a title. Neither could Potiphar have any better interest in him than the Ishmaelites had. Gen. 37:20, 27, 28. For he that shall in this case plead alteration of property, seems to have forfeited a great part of his own claim to humanity. There is no proportion between twenty pieces of silver and liberty. The commodity itself is the claimer. If Arabian gold be imported in any quantities, most are afraid to meddle with it, though they might have it at easy rates, lest if it should have been wrongfully taken from the owners, it should kindle a fire to the consumption of their whole estate. 'Tis pity there should be more caution used in buying a horse, or a little lifeless dust, than there is in purchasing men and women whenas they are the offspring of God, and their liberty is,

*auro pretiosior omni*<sup>2</sup>

And seeing God hath said, "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." Exod. 21:16. Thus law being of everlasting

<sup>1</sup> Last entry made, Sewall died in 1730. <sup>2</sup> more precious than all the gold in the world.

equity, wherein man-stealing is ranked among the most atrocious of capital crimes, what louder cry can there be made of that celebrated warning,

*Caveat emptor!*<sup>1</sup>

And all things considered, it would conduce more to the welfare of the province, to have white servants for a term of years, than to have slaves for life. Few can endure to hear of a negro's being made free; and indeed they can seldom use their freedom well; yet their continual aspiring after their forbidden liberty renders them unwilling servants. And there is such a disparity in their conditions, color and hair, that they can never embody with us and grow up into orderly families, to the peopling of the land but still remain in our body politic as a kind of extravasate<sup>2</sup> blood. As many negro men as there are among us, so many empty places there are in our train bands, and the places taken up of men that might make husbands for our daughters. And the sons and daughters of New England would become more like Jacob and Rachel, if this slavery were thrust quite out of doors. Moreover, it is too well known what temptations masters are under, to connive at the fornication of

their slaves; lest they should be obliged to find them wives or pay their fines. It seems to be practically pleaded that they might be lawless; 'tis thought much of, that the law should have satisfaction for their thefts and other immoralities; by which means, holiness to the Lord is more rarely engraven upon this sort of servitude. It is likewise most lamentable to think how, in taking negroes out of Africa and selling of them here, that which God has joined together men do boldly rend asunder, men from their country, husbands from their wives, parents from their children. How horrible is the uncleanness, immorality, if not murder, that the ships are guilty of that bring great crowds of these miserable men and women! Methinks, when we are bemoaning the barbarous usage of our friends and kinsfolk in Africa,<sup>1</sup> it might not be unseasonable to inquire whether we are not culpable in forcing the Africans to become slaves among ourselves. And it may be a question whether all the benefit received by negro slaves will balance the account of cash laid out upon them, and for the redemption of our own enslaved friends out of Africa. Besides all the persons and estates that have perished there.

1700

<sup>1</sup> Let the purchaser beware      <sup>2</sup> blood seeped out of normal channels into adjacent tissues

<sup>1</sup> Europeans enslaved by the Barbary pirates of northern Africa

## 1666 -- Sarah Kemble Knight -- 1727

SARAH KEMBLE KNIGHT, the daughter of a Boston merchant, had a remarkable career for a woman of her day. Her husband, who was much older than herself, probably died about 1706, leaving her with one daughter. She kept a writing school which Benjamin Franklin is said to have attended, was employed in the recording of public documents, helped settle estates, and managed considerable legal business for others besides conducting a large household of her own relatives. After her daughter's marriage, she followed her to Connecticut and there had charge of several farms, kept a shop and an inn, and speculated in Indian lands. In addition to valuable gifts made to her family, she left an estate of £1800 when she died.

The *Journal*, expanded by her from notes set down at the time, is the account of a business trip which Madam Knight made to New York in 1704, when such a journey was a serious undertaking for anyone. The humor and understanding with which she writes mitigate the formalities of a sometimes stilted literary style. It is further relieved by occasional verse which shows some skill in the use of the couplet. Most important of all, however, are Madam Knight's genre pictures of the life she saw.

*The Journals of Madam Knight and Reverend Mr [John] Buckingham*, with an introduction by Theodore Dwight, first appeared in New York in 1825. Mrs. Knight's *Journal* has often been reprinted, the best recent edition being that of G. P. Winship (1920). The article on her in the *DAB* is by Sidney Gunn.

#### From the JOURNAL

MONDAY, Octb'r the second, 1704. . . . Thus jogging on with an easy pace, my guide telling mee it was dangero's to ride hard in the night, (which his horse had the sence to avoid,) hee entertained me with the adventurs he had passed by late rideing, and eminent dangers he had escaped, so that, remembering the heros in Parismus and the Knight of the Oracle, I didn't know but I had mett with a prince disguis'd

When we had ridd about an how'r, wee come into a thick swamp, which by reason of a great fogg, very much startled mee, it being now very dark. But nothing dismay'd John Hee had encountered a thousand and a thousand such swamps, having a universall knowledge in the woods, and readily answered all my inquiries, which were not a few.

In about an how'r, or something more, after we left the swamp, we come to Billinges, where I was to lodg. My guide dismounted and very complasantly help't me down and shewd the door, signing to me with his hand to go in, which I gladly did, but had not gone many steps into the room, ere I was interogated by a young lady I understood afterwards was the eldest daughter of the family, with these, or words to this purpose, (viz) "Law for mee—what in the world brings you here at this time a night?—I never see a woman on the rode so dreadfull late, in all the days of my versall life. Who are you? Where are you

going? I'me scar'd out of my witts"—with much more of the same kind I stood aghast, preparing to reply, when in comes my guide To him Madam turn'd, roreing out: "Lawfull beart, John, is it you?—how de dol Where in the world are you going with this woman? Who is she?" John made no answer, but sat down in the corner, fumbled out his black junk,<sup>1</sup> and saluted that instead of Debb. She then turned agen to mee and fell anew into her silly questions, without asking me to sitt down

I told her shee treated me very rudely, and I did not think it my duty to answer her unmannerly questions. But to get ridd of them, I told her I come there to have the post's company with me to-morrow on my journey, etc Miss star'd awhile, drew a chair, bid me sitt, and then run up stairs and putts on two or three rings, (or else I had not seen them before,) and returning, sett herself just before me, showing the way to Reding, that I might see her ornaments, perhaps to gain the more respect. But her Granam's new rung sow, had it appeared, would affected me as much. I paid honest John with money and dram according to contract, and dismissd him, and pray'd Miss to shew me where I must lodg. Shee conducted me to a parlour in a little back lento,<sup>2</sup> which was almost fill'd with the bedstead, which was so high that I was forced to clumb on a chair to gitt up to the wretched bed that lay on it; on which having stretcht my tired limbs, and lay'd my head on a sad-coloured pillow, I began to think on the transactions of the past day.

<sup>1</sup> Madam Knight's spelling has been retained in this selection

<sup>1</sup> pipe

<sup>2</sup> lean-to

Tuesday, October the third, about 8 in the morning, I with the Post proceeded forward without observing any thing remarkable; and about two, afternoon, arrived at the Post's second stage, where the western Post mett him and exchanged letters. Here, having called for something to eat, the woman bro't in a twisted thung like a cable, but something whiter; and laying it on the bord, tugg'd for life to bring it into a capacity to spread; which having with great pains accomplished, shee serv'd m a dish of pork and cabage, I suppose the remains of dinner. The sause was of a deep purple, which I tho't was boil'd in her dye kettle, the bread was Indian, and every thung on the table service agreeable to these. I, being hungry, gott a little down; but my stomach was soon cloy'd, and what cabbage I swallowed serv'd me for a cudd the whole day after.

Having here discharged the ordinary<sup>1</sup> for self and guide, (as I understood was the custom,) about three afternoon went on with my third guide, who rode very hard, and having crossed Providence ferry, we come to a river which they generally ride thro'. But I dare not venture; so the Post got a ladd and cannoo to carry me to tother side, and hee rid thro' and led my hors. The cannoo was very small and shallow, so that when we were in she seem'd redy to take in water, which greatly terrified mee, and caused me to be very circumspect, sitting with my hands fast on each side, my eyes stedy, not daring so much as to lodg my tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of my mouth then tother, nor so much as thunk on Lott's wife, for a wry thought would have oversett our wherery: but was soon put out of this pain, by feeling the cannoo on shore, which I as soon almost saluted with my feet, and rewarding my sculler, again mounted and made the best of our way forwards. The rode here was very even and the day pleasant, it being now near sunsett. But the Post told mee we had neer 14 miles to ride to the next stage, (where we were to lodg) I askt him of the rest of the rode, foreseeing wee must travell in the night. Hee told mee there was a bad river we were to ride thro', which was so very fierce a hors could sometimes hardly stem

it: but it was but narrow, and wee should soon be over. I cannot express the concern of mind this relation sett me in: no thoughts but those of the dang'ros river could entertain my imagination, and they were as formidable as varios, still tormenting me with blackest ideas of my approaching fate—sometimes seeing my self drowning, otherwhiles drowned, and at the best like a holy Sister just come out of a spiritual bath in dripping garments

Now was the glorious luminary, with his swift coursers arrived at his stage, leaving poor me with the rest of this part of the lower world in darkness, with which wee were soon surrounded. The only glimmering we now had was from the spangled skies, whose imperfect reflections rendered every object formidable. Each lifeless trunk, with its shatter'd limbs, appear'd an armed enymie, and every little stump like a ravenous devourer. Nor could I so much as discern my guide, when at any distance, which added to the terror

Thus, absolutely lost in thought, and dying with the very thoughts of drowning, I come up with the Post, who I did not see till even with his hors. he told mee he stopt for mee, and wee rode on very deliberately a few paces, when we entred a thicket of trees and shrubbs, and I perceived by the hors's going, we were on the descent of a hill, which, as wee come neerer the bottom, 'twas totally dark with the trees that surrounded it. But I knew by the going of the hors wee had entred the water, which my guide told mee was the hazzardos river he had told me off, and hee, riding up close to my side, bid me not fear—we should be over immediaty. I now ralyed all the courage I was mistriss of, knowing that I must either venture my fate of drowning, or be left like the children in the wood. So, as Post bid me, I gave reins to my nagg, and sitting as stedy as just before in the cannoo, in a few minutes got safe to the other side, which hee told mee was the Narragansett country . .

Being come to Mr. Havens', I was very civilly received, and courteously entertained, in a clean comfortable house, and the good woman was very active in helping off my riding clothes, and then ask't what I would eat. I told her I had some chocholett, if shee

<sup>1</sup> paid the bill at the ordinary, or tavern

would prepare it, which with the help of some milk, and a little clean brass kettle, she soon effected to my satisfaction. I then betook me to my apartment, which was a little room parted from the kitchen by a single board partition; where, after I had noted the occurrences of the past day, I went to bed, which tho' pretty hard, yet neet and handsome. But I could get no sleep, because of the clamor of some of the town topers in next room, who were entred into a strong debate concerning the signification of the name of their country, (viz.) Narraganset. One said it was named so by the Indians, because there grew a brier there, of a prodigious highth and bigness, the like hardly ever known, called by the Indians Narragansett, and quotes an Indian of so barbarous a name for his author, that I could not write it. His antagonist replied no—it was from a spring it had its name, which hee well knew where it was, which was extreem cold in summer, and as hott as could be imagined in the winter, which was much resorted too by the natives, and by them called Narragansett, (hott and cold,) and that was the originall of their places name—with a thousand impertinances not worth notice, which he utter'd with such a roeing voice and thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the table, that it peirced my very head. I heartily fretted, and wish't um tongue tyed, but with as little success as a friend of mine once, who was (as shee said) kept a whole night awake, on a jorney, by a country Left<sup>1</sup> and a Sergeant, Insigne and a Deacon, contriving how to bring a triangle into a square. They kept calling for tother gill, which while they were swallowing, was some intermission; but presently, like oyle to fire, encreased the flame. I set my candle on a chest by the bed side, and setting up, fell to my old way of composing my resentments, in the following manner

I ask thy aid, O potent Rum!  
To charm these wrangling topers dum  
Thou hast their giddy brains possest—  
The man confounded with the beast—  
And I, poor I, can get no rest.  
Intoxicate them with thy fumes  
O still their tongues till morning comes!

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant

And I know not but my wishes took effect,  
for the dispute soon ended with 'tother dram;  
and so good night

They are govern'd by the same laws as wee in Boston, (or little differing,) thro'out this whole Colony of Connecticut, and much the same way of church government, and many of them good, sociable people, and I hope religious too but a little too much independant in their principalls, and, as I have been told, were formerly in their zeal very riggid in their administrations towards such as their lawes made offenders, even to a harmless kiss or innocent merriment among young people Whipping being a frequent and counted an easy punishment, about which, as other crimes, the judges were absolute in their sentences. They told me a pleasant story about a pair of justices in those parts, which I may not omit the relation of

A negro slave belonging to a man in the town, stole a hog's head from his master, and gave or sold it to an Indian, native of the place. The Indian sold it in the neighborhood, and so the theft was found out. Thereupon the heathen was seized, and carried to the Justice's house to be examined. But his worship (it seems) was gone into the field, with a brother in office to gather in his pompions<sup>1</sup>, whither the malefactor is hurried, and complaint made, and satisfaction in the name of justice demanded. Their worships can't proceed in form without a bench. whereupon they order one to be immediately erected, which, for want of fitter materials, they made with pompions—which being finished, down sit their worships, and the malefactor called, and by the senior justice interrogated after the following manner. "You Indian, why did you steal from this man? You shouldn't do so—it's a grandy wicked thing to steal."

"Hol't, hol't," cries justice junior, "Brother, you speak negro to him, I'll ask him. You, sirrah, why did you steal this man's hog's head?"

"Hog's head?" replies the Indian, "me no stomany."

"No," says his worship, and, pulling off his hat, patted his own head with his hand, says, "Tatapa—you, Tatapa—you; all one thus. Hog's head all one thus."

<sup>1</sup> pompkins

"Hahl!" says Netop, "now me stomany that." Whereupon the company fell into a great fit of laughter, even to roaring. Silence is commanded, but to no effect: for they continued perfectly shouting

"Nay," says his worship, in an angry tone, "if it be so, *take me off the bench.*" . . .

If the natives commit any crime on their own precincts among themselves, the English takes no cognizance of [it]. But if on the English ground, they are punishable by our laws. They mourn for their dead by blacking their faces, and cutting their hair, after an awkward and frightful manner; but can't bear you should mention the names of their dead relations to them they trade most for rum, for which they'd hazard their very lives, and the English fit them generally as well, by seasoning it plentifully with water

They give the title of merchant to every trader, who rate their goods according to the time and spend they pay in viz pay, money, pay as money, and trusting *Pay* is grain, pork, beef, &c, at the prices sett by the General Court that year; *money* is pieces of eight, ryals,<sup>1</sup> or Boston or Bay shillings (as they call them,) or *good hard money*, as sometimes silver coin is termed by them, also wampom, vizt. Indian beads which serves for change. *Pay as money* is provisions, as aforesaid one third cheaper then as the Assembly or General Court sets it, and *trust* as they and the merchant agree for time

Now, when the buyer comes to ask for a commodity, sometimes before the merchant answers that he has it, he says, "Is your pay redy?" Perhaps the chap reply's "Yes" "What do you pay in?" say's the merchant. The buyer having answered, then the price is set, as suppose he wants a sixpenny knife, in pay it is 12d—in pay as money eight pence, and hard money its own price, viz. 6d. It seems a very intricate way of trade and what *Lex Mercatoria*<sup>2</sup> had not thought of

Being at a merchants house, in come a tall country fellow, with his alforgos<sup>3</sup> full of tobacco, for they seldom loose their cudd, but keep chewing and spitting as long as they'r eyes are open,—he advanc't to the middle of

the room, makes an awkward nodd, and spitting a large deal of aromattick tincture, he gave a scrape with his shovel-like shoo, leaving a small shovel full of dirt on the floor, made a full stop, hugging his own pretty body with his hands under his arms, stood staring rownd him, like a cart let out of a baskett. At last, like the creature Balam rode on, he opened his mouth and said "Have you any ribinen for hatbands to sell, I pray?"

The questions and answers about the pay being past, the ribin is bro't and opened. Bumpkin simpers, cries, "It's confounded gay, I vow"; and beckning to the door, in comes Jone Tawdry dropping about 50 curtsees, and stands by him. hee shows her the ribin

"Law, you," says shee, "its right gent, do you take it, us dreadfull pretty." Then she enquires, "Have you any hood silk, I pray?" which being brought and bought, "Have you any thred silk to sew it with?" says shee, which being accomodated with they departed. They generally stand after they come in a great while speechless, and sometimes dont say a word till they are askt what they want, which I impute to the awe they stand in of the merchants, who they are constantly almost indebted too, and must take what they bring without liberty to choose for themselves, but they serve them as well, making the merchants stay long enough for their pay

We may observe here the great necessity and bennifitt both of education and conversation; for these people have as large a portion of mother witt, and sometimes a larger, than those who have bin brought up in cities, but for want of improvements, render themselves almost ridiculous, as above. I should be glad if they would leave such folies, and am sure all that love clean houses (at least) would be glad on't too

They are generally very plain in their dress, throuout all the Colony, as I saw, and follow one another in their modes, that you may know where they belong, especially the women, meet them where you will.

Their cheif red letter day is St. Election, which is annually observed according to charter, to choose their Governr: a blessing they can never be thankfull enough for, as they

<sup>1</sup> Spanish reals      <sup>2</sup> the general usage of merchants  
<sup>3</sup> cheeks      Spanish *alforgas*, saddlebags

will find, if ever it be their hard fortune to loose it.<sup>1</sup> The present Governor in Connecticut is the Honorable John Winthrop Esq a gentleman of an ancient and honourable family, whose father was Governor here sometime before, and his grand father had bin Govr of the Massachusetts. This gentleman is a very courteous and affable person, much given to hospitality, and has by his good services gain'd the affections of the people as much as any 10 they both come . . .

Deer 6 From hence we hastened towards Rye, walking and leading our horses neer a mile together, up a prodigious high hill; and so riding till about nine at night, and there arrived and took up our lodgings at an ordinary, which a French family kept. Here being very hungry, I desired a fricasee, which the Frenchman undertaking, mannaged so contrary to my notion of cookery, that I hastened to bed 20 superfluous, and being shewd the way up a pair of stairs which had such a narrow passage that I had almost stopt by the bulk of my body, but arriving at my apartment found it to be a little lento chamber furnisht amongst other rubbish with a high bedd and a low one, a long table, a bench and a bottomless chair,—Little Miss went to scratch up my kennell which russelled as if shee'd bin in the barn amongst the husks, and suppose such was the contents of the 30 tickin—nevertheless being exceeding weary, down I laid my poor carkes (never more tired) and found my covering as scanty as my bed was hard. Annon I heard another russelling noise in the room—called to know the matter—Little Miss said shee was making a bed for the men, who, when they were in bed, complained their leggs lay out of it by reason of its shortness—my poor bones complained bitterly not being used to such lodgings, and so 40 did the man who was with us, and poor I made but one grone, which was from the time I went to bed to the time I riss, which was about three in the morning, setting up by the fire till light, and having discharged our ordinary which was as dear as if we had had far better fare—wee took our leave of Monsier and about seven in the morn come to New Rochell a French town, where we had a good

breakfast. And in the strength of that about an how'r before sunsett got to [New] York. Here I applyd myself to Mr. Burroughs, a merchant to whom I was recommended by my kinsman Capt. Prout, and received great civilities from him and his spouse, who were now both deaf but very agreeable in their conversation, diverting me with pleasant stories of their knowledge in Brittan from whence

The Citie of New York is a pleasant, well compacted place, situated on a commodious river which is a fine harbour for shipping. The buildings brick generally, very stately and high, though not altogether like ours in Boston. The bricks in some of the houses are of divers coullers and laid in checkers, being glazed look very agreeable. The inside of them are neat to admiration, the wooden work, 20 for only the walls are plasterd, and the sumers and gists<sup>1</sup> are planed and kept very white scow'd as so is all the partitions if made of bords. The fire places have no jambs (as ours have) but the backs run flush with the walls, and the hearth is of tyles and is as farr out into the room at the ends as before the fire, which is generally five foot in the low'r rooms, and the peice over where the mantle tree should be is made as ours with joyners work, and as 30 I suppose is fasten'd to iron rods inside. The house where the vendue<sup>2</sup> was, had chimney corners like ours, and they and the hearths were laid with the finest tile that I ever see, and the stair cases laid all with white tile which is ever clean, and so are the walls of the kitchen which had a brick floor. They were making great preparations to receive their Governor, Lord Cornbury from the Jerseys, and for that end raised the militia to gard him 40 on shore to the fort.

They are generally of the Church of England and have a New England gentleman for their minister, and a very fine church set out with all customary requisites. There are also a Dutch and divers Conventicles as they call them, viz. Baptist, Quakers, etc. They are not strict in keeping the Sabbath as in Boston and other places where I had bin, but seem to deal with great exactness as farr as I see or deall

<sup>1</sup> alluding to the fact that Massachusetts at that time was governed by royal appointees

<sup>1</sup> beams (summers) and joists    <sup>2</sup> an auction which had been held previously

with. They are sociable to one another and courteous and civil to strangers and fare well in their houses. The English go very fashionable in their dress. But the Dutch, especially the middling sort, differ from our women, in their habit go loose, were French much<sup>1</sup> which are like a capp and a head band in one, leaving their ears bare, which are sett out with jewells of a large size and many in number. And their fingers hoop't with rings, some with large stones in them of many coullers as were their pendants in their ears, which you should see very old women wear as well as young.

They have vendues very frequently and make their earnings very well by them, for they treat with good liquor liberally, and the customers drink as liberally and generally pay for't as well, by paying for that which they bidd up briskly for, after the sack has gone

<sup>1</sup> wear French caps (Scotch *much*)

plentifully about, tho' sometimes good penny worths are got there.

Their diversion in the winter is riding sleighs about three or four miles out of town, where they have houses of entertainment at a place called the Bowery, and some go to friends houses, who handsomely treat them. Mr. Burroughs carryed his spouse and daughter and myself out to one Madame Dowes, a gentlewoman that lived at a farmhouse, who gave us a handsome entertainment of five or six dishes and choice beer and metheglin, cyder, etc., all which she said was the produce of her farm. I believe we mett 50 or 60 sleighs that day, they fly with great swiftness, and some are so furious that they'll turn out of the path for none except a loaden cart. Nor do they spare for any diversion the place affords, and sociable to a degree, they'r tables being as free to their naybours as to themselves

1704-1705

1825

## ~ Ebenezer Cook ~

ALONG WITH Madam Knight's unflattering pictures of life and travel in rural New England at the beginning of the eighteenth century and Colonel Byrd's similar account of the North Carolinians, may be placed Ebenezer Cook's satire on the ways of the Middle Colonies. Little is known about the author and that almost wholly from his works. From them it appears that he visited Maryland as a tobacco factor or buyer about 1707, that he was angered by the rawness of the country and dishonest practices of some planters and traders, including certain Quakers, and that on his return to England he satirized the colony in his Hudibrastic *Sot-weed Factor*, published in London in 1708. Nevertheless he came back to Maryland, was reconciled to the colony, and became there (according to his recent editor, J. T. Pole, *American Literature*, III, 3, 296-302), "the leader of the first literary group to appear in the South." He published at Annapolis, in 1730, *Sot-weed Redivivus*, a serious-minded verse treatise on over-production of the colony's staple, tobacco; and in 1731 *The Maryland Muse*, comprising a Hudibrastic burlesque on Bacon's Rebellion, in Virginia, and a recension of *The Sot-weed Factor*, from which most of the sting of the earlier satire was extracted. A "Second Part" was promised to appear later, but was probably never published.



*The Sot-weed Factor, or a Voyage to Maryland, A Satyr* (London, 1708) has been reprinted in Shea's *Early Southern Tracts*, No. II; in *Early Maryland Poetry* with an introduction by Bernard C. Steiner (1900); and more recently by James Talbot Pole, *Ebenezer Cook: The Sot-weed Factor*, a reprint, with a biographical introduction, as a Columbia University master's thesis (1931, unpublished). *Sot-weed Redivivus or the Planter's Looking-Glass*, by E. C., Gent (Annapolis, 1730), has not been reprinted. *The Maryland Muse* (1731) exists in a unique copy in the British Museum, of which the New York Public Library has a photostatic reproduction.

For biographical data, see Steiner, *Early Maryland Poetry* (Baltimore, 1900), and Pole's thesis, both cited above. An analysis of *The Maryland Muse* by Pole is given in *American Literature*, III, 296-302.

#### From THE SOT-WEED FACTOR

I THOUGHT it proper to provide  
A lodging for myself and guide,  
So to our inn we march'd away,  
Which at a little distance lay,  
Where all things were in such confusion,  
I thought the world at its conclusion  
A herd of planters on the ground,  
O'er-whelm'd with punch, dead drunk we  
found  
Others were fighting and contending,  
Some burnt their clothes to save the mend-  
ing 10  
A few, whose heads by frequent use  
Could better bear the potent juice,  
Gravely debated state affairs,  
Whilst I most nimbly tripp'd up stairs,  
Leaving my friend discoursing oddly,  
And mixing things profane and godly,  
Just then beginning to be drunk,  
As from the company I slunk  
To every room and nook I crept,  
In hopes I might have somewhere slept,  
But all the bedding was possest 20  
By one or other drunken guest,  
But after looking long about,  
I found an ancient corn-loft out,  
Glad that I might in quiet sleep,  
And there my bones unfractur'd keep  
I lay'd me down secure from fray,  
And soundly snor'd till break of day,  
When waking fresh I sat upright,  
And found my shoes were vanish'd quite— 30  
Hat, wig, and stockings, all were fled  
From this extended Indian bed.  
Vext at the loss of goods and chattel,  
I swore I'd give the rascal battle  
Who had abus'd me in this sort,  
And merchant stranger made his sport.

I furiously descended ladder;  
No hare in March was ever madder.  
In vain I search'd for my apparel,  
And did with host and servants quarrel; 40  
For one whose mind did much aspire  
To mischief, threw them in the fire.<sup>1</sup>  
Equipt with neither hat nor shoe,  
I did my coming hither rue,  
And doubtful thought what I should do  
Then looking round, I saw my friend  
Lie naked on a table's end,  
A sight so dismal to behold,  
One would have judg'd him dead and cold;  
When wringing of his bloody nose— 50  
By fighting got, we may suppose—  
I found him not so fast asleep  
Might give his friends a cause to weep  
"Rise, Oronooko,<sup>2</sup> rise," said I,  
"And from this hell and bedlam fly."  
My guide starts up, and in amaze,  
With blood-shot eyes did round him gaze.  
At length with many a sigh and groan,  
He went in search of aged roan,  
But roan, tho' seldom us'd to falter, 60  
Had fairly this time slept his halter,  
And not content all night to stay,  
Tied up from fodder, ran away.  
After, my guide to catch him ran,  
And so I lost both horse and man;  
Which disappointment, tho' so great,  
Did only mirth and jests create.  
Till one more civil than the rest,  
In conversation for the best,  
Observing that for want of roan, 70  
I should be left to walk alone,

<sup>1</sup> 'Tis the custom of the planters to throw their own or any other person's hat, wig, shooes, or stockings in the fire. [Cook's note] <sup>2</sup> Planters are usually call'd by the name of Oronooko, from their planting of Oronooko-tobacco [Cook's note]

Most readily did me entreat  
 To take a bottle at his seat—  
 A favor at that time so great,  
 I blest my kind propitious Fate;  
 And finding soon a fresh supply  
 Of clothes from store-house kept hard by,  
 I mounted straight on such a steed  
 Did rather curb, than whipping need,  
 And straining at the usual rate, 80  
 With spur of punch which lay in pate,  
 E'er long we lighted at the gate,  
 Where in an ancient cedar house,  
 Dwelt my new friend, a cockerouse <sup>1</sup>,  
 Whose fabric, tho' 'twas built of wood,  
 Had many springs and winters stood  
 When sturdy oaks and lofty pines  
 Were level'd with musmelion vines,  
 And plants eradicated were  
 By hurricanes into the air 90  
 There with good punch and apple juice

<sup>1</sup> Cockerouse is a Man of Quality [Cook's note]

We spent our hours without abuse,  
 Till midnight, in her sable vest,  
 Persuaded gods and men to rest;  
 And with a pleasing, kind surprise,  
 Indulg'd soft slumbers to my eyes.  
 Fierce Aethon, courser of the Sun,  
 Had half his race exactly run,  
 And breath'd on me a fiery ray,  
 Darting hot beams, the following day, 100  
 When snug in blanket white I lay  
 But heat and chinces <sup>1</sup> rais'd the sinner  
 Most opportunely to his dinner  
 Wild fowl and fish, delicious meats,  
 As good as Neptune's doxy eats,  
 Began our hospitable great,  
 Fat venison follow'd in the rear,  
 And turkeys wild, luxurious cheer  
 But what the feast did most commend,  
 Was hearty welcome from my friend 110

1708

<sup>1</sup> chinces bedbugs



~ II ~

*Provincial  
American  
Literature*



## Provincial American Literature

1708-1775

By the eighteenth century the American scene had assumed several new aspects. Most of the colonies had reached a provincial status, though Georgia was still to be colonized by General Oglethorpe in 1733 as a project for rehabilitating the deserving poor of England. Communications and travel were improving. Though road building on a large scale began, as a private enterprise, after 1700, by 1732 Boston and Charleston were linked by a continuous highway. Most travel was still by boat and horseback, but by 1770 stage-coach routes connected most of the larger towns. Postal service became general when Virginia joined the other provinces in a general service in 1732, to be greatly improved under Franklin's direction later. The first newspaper, the *Boston News Letter*, was issued in 1704; and by 1771 twenty-five weeklies were being published. Subject to rigorous censorship at first, the press was freed from external control by an important decision in the trial for libel of a New York printer, Peter Zenger, in 1735. Two short-lived magazines appeared in Philadelphia in 1741, followed by a number of others, mainly there and in Boston. Both these types of periodical were poor and imitative, but they gave evidence of a quickening interest in matters of general information and literary culture.

A majority of the provincial population was literate, though a general system of public education prevailed only in New England. Elsewhere, church schools, private academies, and home instruction were depended upon. For advanced training, a number of young men from the South went to the English universities and law schools, and others to Harvard or Yale. Between 1740 and 1770 six new colleges arose in the northern provinces: Pennsylvania in 1740, Princeton in 1746, King's College (Columbia) in 1754, Brown in 1764, Rutgers in 1766, and Dartmouth in 1769. The growing impression that the college curriculum should have more liberal aims than the training of dull youths to preach dull sermons was voiced by a young Yale tutor, John Trumbull, in his *Progress of Dulness* (1769).

Governmental progress during the provincial period developed along nearly parallel lines in all the colonies. After 1730 all were royal provinces except Rhode Island and Connecticut, which retained their self-governing charters, and the proprietary colonies, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. At the top was the governor, appointed, in all but the charter colonies, by the King or the proprietors. Next was the council—royal appointees except in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut—serving variously as the governor's cabinet, as a legislative upper house, and in certain judicial capacities. The popular assembly, or lower house, representing the towns in New England and the counties elsewhere, was

elected by the citizens having the required religious, property, and other qualifications. In the seventeenth century, the governors, with the assistance of the council, acting in behalf of the wealthier classes, could generally dominate or exercise an effective veto over the acts of the lower house. With considerable uniformity, however, the assembly gained power through the entire provincial period, by means of its control of taxes, including those for the governor's salary. In Massachusetts, control of the council passed into the hands of the lower house, which elected the councillors from among its own number.

Economically, most colonial families were self-supporting, not only raising their own food but making their own clothing and shoes from home-grown materials and constructing their own crude furniture, tools, and household implements. Only the well-to-do imported the finer textiles from England. Manufactures on a larger scale included hats, boots and shoes, barrels, and shingles, which came to be exported in considerable quantities. Shipbuilding thrived so extensively that by 1775 over 2500 American-built ships were engaged in commerce with Great Britain.

A succession of foreign wars involving the English and French colonies came to an end in 1763 when the French withdrew from Canada. In that year also the defeat of Pontiac's well organized federation of tribes broke the power of the Indians to offer continued effective resistance to white aggression. In the dozen years that followed before the outbreak of hostilities with Great Britain, many settlers moved north into Maine and the upper Connecticut valley, and westward in Pennsylvania and the Piedmont section of the South, and even penetrated into eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. By 1750 the total population had grown to over a million and by 1775 to about 2,500,000.

Two important immigrant groups during this period were the Scotch-Irish and the Germans. The former, descendants of Scotch colonists who had lived for a century in the province of Ulster in northern Ireland, spread up and down the Allegheny frontier, from New York to South Carolina. They were tenacious, vigorous, restless, and inured to hard and frugal living—the best type of pioneer stock—and contributed more than any other to pushing the frontier westward after the Revolution. In the South they formed not only a buffer against the Indians but also a democratic influence in opposition to the aristocracy of the tide-water belt. Presbyterian Calvinists in religion, they desired a learned clergy and helped the establishment of schools and colleges where they settled. The Germans were Lutherans and Protestants of other sects, from the upper Rhine, an area overrun by a century of religious and dynastic wars. The greater number settled in east central Pennsylvania, where they retained their German customs and speech. Clinging to the name *deutsch*, they were confused by their English neighbors with the Dutch and are still misnamed the "Pennsylvania Dutch." A smaller number filtered through the same frontier occupied by the Scotch-Irish. The intermarriage

of these two races often fused the sturdiness, industry, and conservatism of the Germans and the more imaginative Celtic zest into an excellent amalgam.

The defeat of the French had other important effects. One was increasing self-confidence and independence on the part of the American provincials. Their own part in the victory had not been small, particularly in the brilliant capture of Louisbourg by the New Englanders in 1745; while the disasters at Fort Duquesne in 1755 and Ticonderoga in 1758 somewhat lessened respect for British military leadership and prowess. The British, on their side, newly masters of a great colonial empire in America and Asia, felt the need of unifying the colonies and making them more profitable to the mother country. The Navigation Acts and customs imposts which had threatened to wipe out colonial commerce had for a century been nullified by large-scale smuggling and illegal trading with the French and Spanish colonies, extremely profitable to the shipowners and merchants of Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. Large exports of fish, grain, and lumber went to the West Indies in particular, in exchange for sugar, rum, molasses, and salt, all without profit to England, which in 1763 was spending £8000 a year in the colonies to collect £2000 in customs. Efforts to enforce the Navigation Acts naturally caused friction. The ban on exporting specie to the colonies or coining money there effected throughout nearly all the colonial period a shortage of currency, which was met partly by the use of Spanish coins<sup>1</sup> and partly by the issuing of paper money. This in turn resulted in inflation and financial distress and in an Act of Parliament in 1764, invalidating colonial paper money as legal tender.

Despite the restrictions on trade, the provinces in general prospered. The fisheries and the whaling industry grew rapidly in New England, and shipbuilding thrived in all the northern colonies. The wars with France and Spain created a lucrative, if risky, privateering business. The transportation of Negro slaves, largely centered at Newport, Rhode Island, was another business of questionable character but of increasing profit. Land speculation was also the source of large fortunes. The ease of acquiring land and the productiveness of the soil offered to the common man, if he were industrious and energetic, opportunities for advancement unknown to the European continent. It is small wonder that to the Frenchman Crèvecoeur colonial life seemed the Utopia that he described in his *Letters of an American Farmer*.

The eighteenth century saw the Middle Provinces advance rapidly in numbers, wealth, and importance. Pennsylvania by 1750 had outstripped all her neighbors except Virginia and Massachusetts in population and was soon to pass the latter. Philadelphia became not only the largest town in English America, but also the chief literary and cultural center, where were to be found the greatest number of men of distinction, like Franklin, Hopkinson, the naturalist William Bartram, and

<sup>1</sup> Spanish coins were the chief "hard money" in circulation in the United States until after 1800.



the scientist Rittenhouse. The Quaker capital also led in the development of hospitals and in humanitarian reform in general. Anthony Benezet not only tried, like his fellow-Quaker Woolman, to prevent the spread of slavery, but also introduced reforms in the education of children in his schools in Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> Like New York, the city had from the beginning a cosmopolitan population and attracted men of talent and energy from many other places. It is perhaps symbolic that the two chief intellectual and literary figures of the mid-century, both New Englanders, removed to the Middle Provinces, Franklin as a youth to Philadelphia and Edwards in his maturity to Princeton.

During this period sectional types, less distinct during the seventeenth century, began to appear. Professor Parrington describes the Yankee character, emerging from the earlier Puritan, as capable, shrewd, generally honest, neighborly, practical-minded, and at least outwardly religious.<sup>2</sup> The Pennsylvanian and Jerseyman were much like him, with somewhat greater breadth of outlook and less need for keenness in business. As contrasted with this prevailingly mercantile character, the Virginian and Carolinian in the mid-eighteenth century had developed into the aristocratic planter whom we associate traditionally with the Old South. He was largely the product of a somewhat feudal life on his great plantation, now served mainly by slave labor, whereas Hugh Jones's description of him earlier in the century is still that of the middle-class merchant-planter, quick at figures, and a shrewd bargainer. By the Revolution, however, the code of personal honor, chivalrous respect for womanhood, and fondness for generous entertainment, racing, and hunting had produced the class of gentlemen, statesmen, and soldiers who were to become leaders in that great conflict. To the Southern gentleman, literature was not a fitting vocation but might be indulged in as an avocation. William Byrd amused himself by elaborating his jottings on the North Carolina boundary expedition into a finely bound volume. It would not have occurred to him to publish it.

It was in the pleasure-loving South that the drama gained its first uncertain foothold in the provinces. After feeble beginnings at Charleston as early as 1703, and about 1716 at Williamsburg, the colonial capital of Virginia, the latter town was ready by 1752 to become the headquarters of a dramatic troupe from London which, under the name of the American Company, was to stay alive until 1800. Banned in New England and little encouraged in Quaker Philadelphia and commercial New York, it subsisted chiefly in coastal towns in Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina, with occasional sojourns in the British West Indies. On one of its visits to Philadelphia, in 1767, it presented the first native tragedy to receive the dignity of a public performance, Thomas Godfrey's *The Prince of Parthia*.

In England as in America, the eighteenth century was marked by a low ebb of

<sup>1</sup> For Benezet's activities, see G. S. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet* (1937).

<sup>2</sup> V. L. Parrington, *The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800* (1927), 88-90.

spirituality in the older established religions. General religious toleration and increased comfortableness of living took the edge off sectarian zeal, and the minds of all classes were directed toward business and politics. The alarm of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards at the decline of seriousness among the Calvinists of New England is expressed in their writings, while the low esteem into which the Anglican clergy in Virginia had sunk appears in William Byrd's jests at the expense of the chaplain who accompanied his expedition. In the mid-century the influence of both denominations was greatly weakened by the spread of deism and by the Great Awakening.

Deism, somewhat like puritanism, was, as Dr. Gustaf Koch describes it, "an attitude of mind rather than a specific creed, rather like the scientific temper of our age, which is superimposed upon our religious beliefs and institutions."<sup>1</sup> According to the older theologies, man was the chief concern of God, who intervened directly in his personal affairs. But the new physics of Newton had changed the Earth from the center about which all else revolved, to a small unit in an infinitely vast universe. Certain implications of this were uneasily sensed by Sewall, who recorded in his diary, December 23, 1714, that "Dr. C. Mather preached excellently from Ps. 37. Trust in the Lord, etc., only spake of the Sun being in the centre. I think it inconvenient to assert such problems." In the minds of the English deists like Shaftesbury, Locke, and Wollaston, "such problems" led to "the picture of a mechanically perfect universe, operating with admirable precision . . . and presided over by . . . a Creator intelligent, immaterial, and benevolent, who executed his will through changeless laws rather than through special providences."<sup>2</sup> Man, at present maladjusted to this divine scheme, not through his original sin but through centuries of misunderstandings chiefly due to ecclesiasticism, could regain his share in the divine benevolence by returning to a rationally ordered life and by contemplation of the glories of God's creation in external nature.

Such conceptions of God, man, and the universe, at great variance with the ideas of Governor Winthrop and Jonathan Edwards, spread slowly in America, at first among intellectuals like Cotton Mather himself, whose *Christian Philosopher* (1721) seems to show their influence, and Franklin, whose whole philosophy was colored by them; and later on a lower level through the fraternizing of Colonial and British army officers during the French and Indian Wars. They were an influence in the preaching of liberal Congregationalists like Mayhew and Chauncy in Boston in the mid-century, and prepared the way for the later shift to Unitarianism. In the ensuing Revolutionary period they were to receive much more direct and positive assertion in the writings of Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Freneau.

While deism was undermining the older churches intellectually, the Great

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Koch, *Republican Religion. The American Revolution and the Cult of Reason* (1933), p. xiv. See H. M. Morris, *Deism in 18th Century America* (1934), for a summary of deistic influences in America.

<sup>2</sup> Walter F. Taylor, *History of American Letters* (1936), 41 and 50.

Awakening assailed them on the side of the emotions. This great religious revival, in full progress by 1741, paralleled the success of the Wesleyan movement among the lower classes in England. Preceded by lesser revivals such as that of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton in 1734, it received great impetus from the preaching of George Whitefield, who traveled throughout the provinces, addressing large audiences from Georgia to Maine. Its greatest hold was upon the newer, less stable population of the back country, but it penetrated the older towns as well, producing vexatious schisms, such as that between the conservative Old Light Calvinists and the evangelistic New Lights. The Awakening was an evangelical movement, holding out the promise of salvation to all who would accept divine grace, and stressing the spiritual experience of conversion. Edwards recorded its manifestations with eager interest, but the faculties of Harvard and Yale, and conservative preachers like Charles Chauncy, denounced its emotional excesses and questioned its permanent good effects.

Whitefield favored no creed, but most of his converts joined either the newly formed Methodists or the Baptists. The dramatic appeal of the central rite of the latter was great, but their congregational form of church organization was a handicap in competition with the more closely knit episcopal form of government which the Methodists took over from the Church of England and which enabled them to obtain the numerical superiority. Between them, they superseded in the interior areas the Anglicans, "Old Light" Congregationalists, and Presbyterians, followed the frontier in its western advance, and became the dominant Protestant sects of the United States. In contrast with the increasing decorum and rationalism of the older faiths, they contributed an element of optimism, enthusiasm, and democracy to our early national life.

It was during the Provincial period that literature in the American provinces became responsive to current literary changes in England, subject generally to a "cultural lag" of about thirty years between the rise of a literary form or vogue in England and its first appearance here. In prose, the enormous stride in clearness and effectiveness made in England by Swift, Defoe, and the essayists shows its influence in America, in any comparison between the seventeenth-century Increase and Cotton Mather and the eighteenth-century Franklin, Byrd, Jones, and Hopkinson.<sup>1</sup> The most marked prose influence was that of the very popular essay type introduced by Steele and Addison. The earliest extant American periodical essay, the manuscript *Telltale* series (1721), written by a group of students at Harvard, is surprisingly early, only fourteen years after the first *Tatler*, and about the same time the boy Franklin was transposing *Spectator* essays (1711-14) for the improvement of his own style.

<sup>1</sup> All these men had had the advantage of residence in England. Credit should also be given to a conscious and sustained effort of the New England clergy for the improvement of sermon writing. See H. M. Jones, "American Prose Style, 1700-1770," in the *Hamington Library Bulletin*, No. 6, 73-108 (Nov. 1934).

American poetry, comparatively formless in the seventeenth century, improved under the discipline imposed by the clear and incisive if somewhat formal and frigid heroic couplets of Dryden and Pope. The Reverend Mather Byles and Benjamin Church by the mid-eighteenth century were turning out couplet verse little inferior in formal nicety to that of contemporary neo-classical poets in England. A little later the Philadelphia poets Godfrey, Evans, and Hopkinson had written graceful pastoral and amatory lyrics in imitation of the Cavalier and neo-classical song writers.

It was on the whole fortunate that this awakening sensitiveness to literary influences abroad should have come in the time of the so-called Age of Enlightenment. In England, neo-classicism, while greatly advancing the attention to literary form, is generally charged with chilling and fettering the spirit of literature as compared with the Elizabethan and early Stuart times. In America, paradoxically, literature "had first to be made secular; and it was the historic mission of that aspect of the classical world-order called the Enlightenment to liberate American thought and expression from theology."<sup>1</sup> As a result, provincial literature in the decades just before the Revolution achieved a surprising maturity in the work of Byrd, Edwards, Hopkinson, Crèvecoeur, and Franklin.

Among these, two stand out pre-eminently. Jonathan Edwards was Franklin's superior in intellectual power and spiritual sensitiveness. His youthful exaltation in the presence of nature and his scientific and psychological speculations anticipate the Transcendentalists and the scientific explorers of the nineteenth century; but his religious devotion and his metaphysical skill led him into other-worldly paths. Thus he is remembered vaguely as an enkindler of spiritual emotionalism and as the last great defender through incontrovertible logic of the Calvinistic system of theology. The Yankee Franklin looked outward and forward, as a product of the Enlightenment. There was no practical concern of his time which he did not touch helpfully. His was the genius of common sense, in politics, invention, and society. And though pure letters were to him an avocation, his proverbial sayings, his essay letters, and the earlier passages of his unfinished autobiography are the best remembered literature of his time in America.

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Jones, *The Drift to Liberalism in the American Eighteenth Century* (1936), 17. See also A. D. Lovejoy, "The Parallel between Deism and Classicism," *Modern Philology*, XXIX, 281-299 (Feb., 1932).

c. 1670 ~ *Hugh Jones* ~ 1760

PROFESSOR of mathematics at the College of William and Mary, chaplain to the House of Burgesses, minister of Jamestown, and lecturer in Bruton Church, Williamsburg, Hugh Jones played an important part in the life of Virginia after his going thither in 1716. In spite of these manifold activities he found time to write three textbooks, *An Accidence to Christianity*, *An Accidence to the Mathematics*, and *A Short English Grammar*. *An Accidence to the English Tongue*. Three years after his return to England in 1721, he published the last-named in London, together with a more important work, *The Present State of Virginia*, designed to promote the interests of the colony. As a source of accurate information on social, economic, and ecclesiastical affairs in Virginia during the early eighteenth century, this work is unsurpassed.

Jones came back to America and finally, in 1731, settled as rector of St. Stephen's Parish, Cecil County, Maryland. There he showed himself a zealous Christian and a loyal subject. He left instructions that he should be buried with his feet to the west so that on the Day of Judgment he should "face his people as they arose from their graves. He was not ashamed of them."

His ability to judge well the distinctive qualities of people is well illustrated in the following selection from his work, which exhibits effectively the character of the Virginian youth at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as contrasted with the later aristocracy of the Revolutionary time.

*The Present State of Virginia* (London, 1724) was reprinted in 1865 as No. 5 of Sabine's Reprints. Biographical sketches of Jones are those in *DAB* by A. C. Gordon, Jr., and in Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, V, 9-13 (1859).

From THE PRESENT STATE  
OF VIRGINIA

[*Virginian Schoolboys*]

Thus they have good natural notions and will soon learn arts and sciences, but are generally diverted by business or inclination from profound study and prying into the depth of things, being ripe for management of their affairs before they have laid so good a foundation of learning, and had such instructions and acquired such accomplishments as

might be instilled into such good natural capacities. Nevertheless, through their quick apprehension they have a sufficiency of knowledge and fluency of tongue, though their learning for the most part be but superficial.

They are more inclinable to read men by business and conversation than to dive into books, and are for the most part only desirous of learning what is absolutely necessary in the shortest and best method.

Having this knowledge of their capacities and inclination from sufficient experience, I have composed on purpose some short treat-

uses adapted with my best judgment to a course of education for the gentlemen of the plantations, consisting in a short English grammar; an accidence to Christianity, an accidence to the mathematics, especially to arithmetic in all its parts and applications, algebra, geometry, surveying of land, and navigation.

These are the most useful branches of learning for them, and such as they willingly and readily master, if taught in a plain and short method, truly applicable to their genius; which I have endeavored to do for the use of them and all others of their temper and parts.

They are not very easily persuaded to the improvement of useful inventions (except a few, such as sawing mills), neither are they great encouragers of manufactures, because of the trouble and certain expense in attempts of this kind, with uncertain prospect of gain, whereas by their staple commodity, tobacco, they are in hopes to get a plentiful provision, nay, often very great estates

Upon this account they think it folly to take off their hands (or Negroes) and employ their care and time about anything that may make them lessen their crop of tobacco

So that though they are apt to learn, yet they are fond of, and will follow their own ways, humors, and notions, being not easily brought to new projects and schemes, so that I question if they would have been imposed upon by the Mississippi or South Sea or any other such monstrous bubbles.

In their computations of time, weights, and measures, both of length, superficies, and solidity, they strictly adhere to what is legal; not running into precarious customs as they do in England. Thus their quart is the true Winchester, their hundred is 100, not 112, and they survey land by statute measure.

Indeed, what English coin is there is advanced in value, so that a shilling passes for 14d, and a guinea goes by tale for 26s, but the current money is the Spanish, which in reality is about 151 per cent inferior to our English coin, as settled by law, but frequently the value of this varies in respect of sterling bills according to the circumstances of trade, currency and sterling being sometimes at a par; but for the generality 10 per cent discount is allowed for sterling bills.

As for education, several are sent to England for it; though the Virginians being naturally of good parts (as I have already hunted) neither require nor admire as much learning as we do in Britain, yet more would be sent over, were they not afraid of the smallpox, which most commonly proves fatal to them.

But, indeed, when they come to England, they are generally put to learn to persons that know little of their temper, who keep them drudging on in what is of least use to them, in pedantic methods too tedious for their volatile genius

For grammar learning, taught after the common roundabout way, is not much beneficial nor delightful to them, so that they are noted to be more apt to spoil their school fellows than improve themselves, because they are imprisoned and enslaved to what they hate and think useless, and have not peculiar management proper for their humor and occasion

A civil treatment with some liberty, if permitted with discretion, is most proper for them and they have most need of, and readily take polite and mathematical learning, and in English may be conveyed to them (without going directly to Rome and Athens) all the arts, sciences, and learned accomplishments of the ancients and moderns, without the fatigue and expense of another language, for which most of them have little use or necessity, since (without another) they may understand their own speech, and all other things requisite to be learned by them, sooner and better

Thus the youth might as well be instructed there as here by proper methods, without the expense and danger of coming hither, especially if they make use of the great advantage of the college at Williamsburg, where they may (and many do) imbibe the principles of all human and divine literature, both in English and in the learned languages

By the happy opportunity of this college may they be advanced to religious and learned education, according to the discipline and doctrine of the established Church of England, in which respect this college may prove of singular service, and be an advantageous and laudable nursery and strong bulwark against the contagious dissensions in Virginia, which is the most ancient and loyal, the most plenti-

ful and flourishing, the most extensive and beneficial colony belonging to the Crown of Great Britain, upon which it is most directly dependent; wherein is established the Church of England, free from faction and sects, being ruled by the laws, customs and constitutions of Great Britain, which it strictly observes, only where the circumstances and occasion of the country by an absolute necessity require some small alterations; which nevertheless must not be contrary (though different from and subservient) to the laws of England.

### [*The Virginia Character*]

Though the violence of neither Whig nor Tory reigns there, yet have they parties, for the very best administration must expect to meet with some opposition in all places, especially where there is a mixture of people of different countries concerned, whose education and interest may propose to them notions and views different from each other

Most other plantations, especially they that are granted away to proprietors, are inferior to Virginia, where the seeming interest and humor of the owners often divert them from pursuit of the same proper methods, besides, they cannot have such a right claim to the favor of the Crown of Great Britain

Thus Virginia, having to itself, with Maryland, the staple commodity of tobacco, has a great advantage of all other plantations on the continent for the encouragement of the Crown, whereas others belonging to gentlemen, or having no peculiar trade, cannot expect such power to advance and improve their interest

To this add that Virginia equals, if not exceeds, all others in goodness of climate, soil, health, rivers, plenty and all necessities and conveniences of life. Besides, she has, among others, these particular advantages of her younger sister Maryland, viz., freedom from

Popery and the direction of proprietors; not but that part of Virginia which is between the rivers Potomac and Rappahannock belongs to proprietors, as to the quitrent, yet the government of these counties (called the Northern Neck) is under the same regulation with the other parts of the country.

If New England be called a receptacle of Dissenters, and an Amsterdam of religion, Pennsylvania the nursery of Quakers, Maryland the retirement of Roman Catholics, North Carolina the refuge of runaways, and South Carolina the delight of buccaneers and pirates, Virginia may be justly esteemed the happy retreat of true Britons and true Churchmen for the most part, neither soaring too high nor drooping too low, consequently should merit the greater esteem and encouragement.

The common planters, leading easy lives, do not much admire labor, or any manly exercise, except horse-racing, nor diversion, except cock-fighting, in which some greatly delight. This easy way to living, and the heat of the summer, make some very lazy, who are then said to be climate-struck

The saddle horses, though not very large, are hardy, strong, and fleet, and will pace naturally and pleasantly at a prodigious rate.

They are such lovers of riding that almost every ordinary person keeps a horse, and I have known some spend the morning in ranging several miles in the woods to find and catch their horses only to ride two or three miles to church, to the court-house, or to a horse-race, where they generally appoint to meet upon business, and are more certain of finding those that they want to speak or deal with, than at their home

No people can entertain their friends with better cheer and welcome; and strangers and travellers are here treated in the most free, plentiful and hospitable manner, so that a few inns or ordinaries on the road are sufficient.

## 1674 ~ William Byrd ~ 1744

BORN ON A FRONTIER plantation and heir to a large estate, but educated for the law at the Middle Temple in London, and in Holland, William Byrd was well qualified to serve his native Virginia. He was elected to the House of Burgesses as soon as he returned from abroad in 1692, and proceeded to the Council in 1710. When the contest for authority arose between the rich planters and Governor Spotswood, Byrd defended the colonists' side of the case in England and at home so effectively that he was of real assistance in securing the governor's removal and the final assurance of complete power to the Council.

He retired for a time to his beautiful estate, Westover, but in 1728 he was one of the commissioners who ran the dividing line between Virginia and North Carolina, and in 1736 he surveyed the Northern Neck. As a large investor in valuable border lands in the newly explored territory, he was interested in western expansion and was disturbed by the progress of the French in the Ohio territory. In 1743, not long before his death, he was made President of the Council.

At the time of his surveying expedition, Colonel Byrd kept a journal—the "Secret History," from which extracts are given below—which is exceedingly frank in its comments on his associates and their conduct. Later, at his leisure, he refurbished it, omitting scandalous and libelous episodes, inserting information regarding flora and fauna in the territory traversed, and adding learned, sententious, and humorous observations for embellishment.

It is characteristic of the Virginia gentleman's ideas of the literary profession that Byrd's three books, *The History of the Dividing Line*, *A Journey to the Land of Eden*, and *A Progress to the Mines*, though elaborately bound and preserved for his family, were never published until 1841, as *The Westover Manuscripts*, after they had passed out of the hands of his descendants. They show the intelligent observation to be expected of a Fellow of the Royal Society, but they also exemplify a grace and sprightliness far more characteristic of eighteenth-century London than of the American colonies.

J. S. Bassett's *The Writings of Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia, Esqr.* (1901) has been the standard edition of Byrd's works but does not include the *Secret History of the Line*, first printed in W. K. Boyd's *William Byrd's Histories of the Dividing Line*, for the North Carolina Historical Commission (1929). *A Journey to the Land of Eden and Other Papers* was edited for the American Bookshelf by Mark Van Doren in 1928. For biographies, see Bassett's introduction; R. C. Beatty's *William Byrd of Westover* (1932), and T. J. Wertenbaker's article in *DAB*. Other sources of information are P. A. Bruce, *The Virginia Plutarch* (1929), I, 135-154, "Letters of William Byrd and," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, October, 1901,



and January, 1902, G. R. Lyle, "William Byrd, Book Collector," *American Book Collector*, V, 163-165 (May-June, 1934), and M. H. Woodfin, "William Byrd and the Royal Society," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XL, 23-34 (January, 1932).

From THE SECRET HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

[*A Disagreement among the Commissioners*]

[Oct.] 5. This day our Surveyors met with such uneven Ground & so many Thickets, that with all their Diligence they cou'd not run the Line so far as 5 Miles. In this small Distance it crost over Hico-ott-mony Creek no less than 5 times Our Indian Ned Bear-skin informed us at first, that this Creek was the South Branch of Roanoke River, but I thought it impossible, both by reason of its Narrowness & the small Quantity of Water that came down it. However it past so with us at present til future Experience cou'd inform us better

About 4 a Clock this afternoon Jumble<sup>2</sup> advanced from the rest of his Company to tell me, that his Colleagues for Carolina wanted to speak with me. I desired if they had any thing to communicate, that they wou'd please to come forward. It was some time before I heard any more of these worthy Gentlemen, but at last Shoebrush<sup>3</sup> as the Mouth of the rest, came to acquaint me that their Government had ordered them to run the Line but 30 or 40 Miles above Roanoke, that they had now carry'd it near 50, & intended to go no further. I let them know, it was a little unkind they had not been so gracious as to acquaint us with their Intentions before. That it had been Neighbourly to have inform'd us with their Intentions before we sat out, how far they intended to go that we might also have receiv'd the Commands of our Government in that Matter. But since they had fail'd in that Civility we wou'd go on without them, since we were provided with Bread for 6 Weeks longer. That it was a great Misfortune to lose their Company, but that it wou'd be a much

greater to lose the Effect of our Expedition, by doing the Business by halves. That tho' we went by our selves, our Surveyors wou'd continue under the same Oath to do impartial Right both to his Majesty, & the Lords Proprietors, & tho' their Government might chuse perhaps, whether it wou'd be bound by our Line, yet it wou'd at least be a direction to Virginia how far his Majesty's Land extended to the Southward

Then they desired that the Surveyors might make a fair Plot of the distance we had run together, And that of this there might be two Copys sign'd by the Commissioners of both Governments. I let them know I agreed to that, provided it might be done before Monday Noon, when, by the Grace of God, we wou'd proceed without Loss of time, because the Season was far advanc'd, & wou'd not permit us to waste one Moment in Ceremony to Gentlemen who had shew'd none to us. Here the Conversation ended 'til after Supper, when the Subject was handled with more Spirit by Firebrand.<sup>4</sup> On my repeating what I had said before upon this Subject, he desir'd a Sight of Our Commission. I gave him to understand, that since the Commissioners were the same that acted before, all which had heard the Commission read, & since those for Carolina had a Copy of it, I had not thought it necessary to cram my Portmanteau with it a Second time. And was therefore sorry I cou'd not oblige him with a Sight of it. He immediately said he wou'd take a Minute of this, and after being some time in scrambling of it, he read to this Effect. That being ask't by him for a sight of my Commission, I had deny'd it upon pretence that I had it not with me. That I had also refus'd the Commissioners of Carolina, to tarry on Monday, til the necessary Plats cou'd be prepar'd & exchanged, but resolv'd to move forward as soon as the Tent shou'd be dry, by which

<sup>1</sup> The spelling and capitalization of the selections from Byrd have been preserved. <sup>2</sup> Christopher Gale (d. 1734), Chief Justice of North Carolina, 1712-1731. <sup>3</sup> John Lovick, member of the Council of North Carolina and Secretary of the Province.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Fitz William, a royal official in Virginia and member of the boundary commissioners, between whom and his fellow Virginians a lively feud was maintained.

Means the Surveyors wou'd be oblig'd to work on the Sunday. To this, I answer'd that this was a very smart Minute, but that I objected to the word pretence, because it was neither decent, nor true, that I deny'd him a Sight of our Commission upon any pretence, but for the honest Reason that I had it not there to shew; most of the Company thinking my objection just, he did vouchsafe to soften that Expression, by saying I refus'd to shew 10 him the Commission, alledging I had not brought it.

Soon after when I said that our Governor expected that we shou'd carry the Line to the Mountains, he made answer, that the Governor had exprest himself otherwise to him, & told him that 30 or 40 Miles wou'd be sufficient to go beyond Roanoke River. Honest Meanwell<sup>1</sup> hearing this, & I suppose not giving entire Credit to it, immediately lugg'd out his Pencil, saying in a Comical Tone, that since he was for Minutes, I-Gad he wou'd take a Minute of that The other took Fire at this, & without any preface or Ceremony seized a Limb of our Table, big enough to knock down an Ox, and lifted it up at Meanwell, while he was scratching out his Minutes I happening to see him brandish this dangerous Weapon, darted towards him in a moment, to stop his hand, by which the Blow was prevented, but while I 30 hinder'd one mischief, I had like to have done another, for the Swiftness of my Motion over-set the Table, & Shoebrush fell under it, to the great hazard of his gouty Limbs So soon as Meanwell came to know the favour that Firebrand intended him, he saluted him with the Title he had a good right to, namely, of Son of a W—e, telling him if they had been alone, he durst as well be damn'd as lift that Club at him To this the other reply'd with 40 much Vigour, that he might remember, if he pleas'd, that he had now lifted a Club at him

I must not forget that when Firebrand first began this Violence, I desir'd him to forbear, or I shou'd be obliged to take him in Arrest But he telling me in a great Fury that I had no Authority, I call'd to the Men, & let him know, if he wou'd not be easy, I wou'd soon convince him of my Authority The Men in-

stantly gather'd about the Tent ready to execute my Orders, but we made a Shift to keep the Peace without coming to Extremitys. One of the People, hearing Firebrand very loud, desired his Servant to go to his Assistance. By no means, said he, that's none of my Business, but if the Gentleman will run himself into a Broil, he may get out of it as well as he can.

This Quarrel ended at last as all Publick Quarrels do, without Bloodshed as Firebrand has Experienced several times, believing that on such Occasions a Man may shew a great deal of Courage with very little Danger. However knowing Meanwell was made of truer Metal, I was resolv'd to watch him narrowly, to prevent further Mischief. As soon as this Fray was compos'd the Carolina Commissioners reur'd very soon with their Champion, to flatter him, I suppose, upon the great Spirit he had shew'd in their Cause against those who were join'd with him in Commission

1728

1929

#### From THE HISTORY OF THE DIVIDING LINE

##### [*Husbandry in North Carolina*]

[MARCH] 10. [1728] The Sabbath happen'd very opportunely to give some ease to our jaded People, who rested religiously from every work, but that of cooking the Kettle We observed very few corn-fields in our Walks, and those very small, which sem'd the Stranger, to us, because we could see no other Tokens of Husbandry or Improvement. But, upon further Inquiry, we were given to understand People only made Corn for themselves and not for their Stocks, which know very well how to get their own Living.

Both Cattle and Hogs ramble in the Neighbouring Marshes and Swamps, where they maintain themselves the whole Winter long, and are not fetch'd home till the Spring. Thus these Indolent Wretches, during one half of the Year, lose the Advantage of the Milk of their cattle, as well as their Dung, and many of the poor Creatures perish in the Mire, into the Bargain, by this ill Management Some, who pique themselves more upon

<sup>1</sup> William Dandridge (d 1743), later a member of the Virginia Council

Industry than their Neighbours, will, now and then, in compliment to their Cattle, cut down a Tree whose Limbs are loaden with the Moss aforementioned'd. The trouble wou'd be too great to Climb the Tree in order to gather this Provender, but the Shortest way (which in this Country is always counted the best) is to fell it, just like the Lazy Indians, who do the same by such Trees as bear fruit, and so make one Harvest for all By this bad Husbandry Milk is so Scarce, in the Winter Season, that were a Big-belly'd Woman to long for it, She would lose her longing And, in truth, I believe this is often the Case, and at the same time a very good reason why so many People in this Province are markt with a Custard Complexion

The only Business here is raising of Hogs, which is manag'd with the least Trouble, and affords the Diet they are most fond of The Truth of it is the Inhabitants of N Carolina devour so much Swine's flesh, that it fills them full of gross Humours.<sup>1</sup> For want too of a constant Supply of Salt, they are commonly obliged to eat it Fresh, and that begets the highest taint of Scurvy. Thus, whenever a Severe Cold happens to Constitutions thus Vitiated, tis apt to improve into the Yaws, called there very justly the country-Distemper This has all the Symptoms of the Pox, with this Aggravation, that no Preparation of Mercury will touch it. First it seizes the Throat, next the Palate, and lastly shews its spite to the poor Nose, of which 'tis apt in a small time treacherously to undermine the Foundation.

This Calamity is so common and familiar here, that it ceases to be a Scandal, and in the disputes that happen about Beauty, the Noses have in some Companies much ado to carry it. Nay, tis said that once, after three good Pork years, a Motion had like to have been made in the House of Burgesses, that a Man with a Nose shou'd be incapable of holding any Place of Profit in the Province; which Extraordinary Motion could never have been intended without Some Hopes of a Majority

Thus, considering the foul and pernicious Effects of Eating Swine's Flesh in a hot Country, it was wisely forbidden and made an

<sup>1</sup> animal fluids

Abomination to the Jews, who liv'd much in the same Latitude with Carolina.

11. We ordered the Surveyors early to their Business, who were blest with pretty dry Grounds for three Miles together. But they paid dear for it in the next two, consisting of one continued frightfull Pocason, which no Creatures but those of the amphibious kind ever had ventur'd into before

This filthy Quagmire did in earnest put the Men's Courage to a Tryal, and tho' I can't say it made them lose their Patience, yet they lost their Humour for Joking. They kept their Graviry like so many Spaniards, so that a Man might then have taken his Opportunity to plunge up to the Chun, without Danger of being laught at. However, this unusual composure of countenance could not fairly be call'd eomplaining

Their Day's-Work ended at the Mouth of Northern's Creek, which empties itself into N W River; tho' we chose to Quarter a little higher up the River, near Mossy Point This we did for the Convenience of an Old house to Shelter our Persons and Baggage from the rain, which threaten'd us hard We judg'd the thing right, for there fell an heavy shower in the Night, that drove the most hardy of us into the House Tho' indeed, our case was not much mended by retreating thither, because that Tenement having not long before been us'd as a Pork-Store, the Moisture of the Air dissolv'd the Salt that lay Scatter'd on the Floor, and made it as wet within Doors as without. However, the Swamps and Marshes we were lately accusom'd to had made such Beavers and Otters of us that Nobody caught the least cold

We had encamp't so early, that we found time in the Evening to walk near half a Mile into the Woods There we came upon a Family of Mulattoes, that call'd themselves free, tho' by the Shyness of the Master of the House, who took care to keep least in Sight, their Freedom seem'd a little Doubtful. It is certain many Slaves Shelter themselves in this Obscure Part of the World, nor will any of their righteous Neighbours discover them. On the Contrary, they find their Account in Settling such Fugitives on some out-of-the-

way-corner of their Land, to raise Stocks for a mean and inconsiderable Share, well knowing their Condition makes it necessary for them to Submit to any Terms.

Nor were these worthy Borderers content to Shelter Runaway Slaves, but Debtors and Criminals have often met with the like Indulgence. But if the Government of North Carolina has encourag'd this unneighbourly Policy in order to increase their People, it is no more than what Ancient Rome did before them, which was made a City of Refuge for all Debtors and Fugitives, and from that wretched Beginning grew up in time to be Mistress of a great Part of the World And, considering how Fortune delights in bringing great things out of Small, who knows but Carolina may, one time or other, come to be the Seat of some other great Empire?

### [*The Great Dismal Swamp*]

13 Early this Morning our Chaplain repaired to us with the Men we had left at Mr. Wilson's We had sent for them the Evening before to relieve those who had the Labour-Oar from Coratuck-Inlet But to our great surprise, they petition'd not to be reliev'd, hoping to gain immortal Reputation by being the first of Mankind that Ventur'd thro' the great Dismal. But the rest being equally Ambitious of the same Honour, it was but fair to decide their Pretensions by Lot. After Fortune had declar'd herself, those which she had excluded offer'd Money to the Happy Persons to go in their Stead But Hercules would have as soon sold the Glory of Cleansing the Augean Stables, which was pretty near the same Sort of Work

No sooner was the Controversy at an end, but we sent them unfortunate Fellows back to their Quarters, whom Chance had Condemn'd to remain upon Firm Land and Sleep in a whole Skin In the mean while the Surveyors carry'd the Line 3 Miles, which was no Contemptible day's work, considering how cruelly they were entangled with Bryars and Gall Bushes. The Leaf of this last Shrub bespeaks it to be of the Alaternus Family.

Our Work ended within a Quarter of a Mile of the Dismal above-mention'd, where

the Ground began to be already full of Sunken Holes and Slashes,<sup>1</sup> which had, here and there, some few Reeds growing in them

Tis hardly credible how little the Bordering inhabitants were acquainted with this mighty Swamp, notwithstanding they had liv'd their whole lives within Smell of it Yet, as great Strangers as they were to it, they pretended to be very exact in their Account of its Dimensions, and were positive it could not be above 7 or 8 Miles wide, but knew no more of the Matter than Star-gazers know of the Distance of the Fixt Stars At the Same time, they were Simple enough to amuse our Men with Idle Stories of the Lyons, Panthers and Alligators, they were like to encounter in that dreadful Place

In short, we saw plainly there was no Intelligence of this Terra Incognita to be got, but from our own Experience For that Reason it was resolv'd to make the requisite Dispositions to enter it next Morning. We allotted every one of the Surveyors for this painful Enterprise, with 12 Men to attend them Fewer than that cou'd not be employ'd in clearing the way, carrying the Chain, marking the Trees, and bearing the necessary Bedding and Provisions. Nor wou'd the Commissioners themselves have Spared their Persons on this Occasion, but for fear of adding to the poor men's Burthen, while they were certain they cou'd add nothing to their Resolution

We quarter'd with our Friend and Fellow Traveller, William Wilkins, who had been our faithful Pilot to Coratuck, and liv'd about a mile from the Place where the Line ended Everything lookt so very clean, and the Furniture so neat, that we were tempted to Lodge within Doors. But the Novelty of being shut up so close quite spoil'd our rest, nor did we breathe so free by abundance, as when we lay in the open Air.

14. Before nine of the Clock this Morning, the Provisions, Bedding and other Necessaries, were made up into Packs for the Men to carry on their Shoulders into the Dismal. They were victual'd for 8 days at full Allowance, Nobody doubting but that wou'd be abundantly

<sup>1</sup> swampy bottom land

Sufficient to carry them thro' that Inhospitable Place; nor Indeed was it possible for the Poor Fellows to Stagger under more As it was, their Loads weigh'd from 60 to 70 Pounds, in just Proportion to the Strength of those who were to bear them.

Twou'd have been unconscionable to have Saddled them with Burthens heavier than that, when they were to lugg them thro' a filthy Bogg, which was hardly practicable with no Burthen at all

Besides this Luggage at their Backs, they were oblig'd to measure the distance, mark the Trees, and clear the way for the Surveyors every Step they went. It was really a Pleasure to see with how much Cheerfulness they undertook, and with how much Spirit they went thro' all this Drudgery For their Greater Safety, the Commissioners took care to furnish them with Peruvian-Bark,<sup>1</sup> Rhubarb and Hipococacnah,<sup>2</sup> in case they might happen, in that wet Journey, to be taken with fevers or Fluxes

Altho' there was no need for Example to inflame Persons already so cheerful, yet to enter the People with better gracc, the Author and two more of the Commissioners accompanied them half a Mile into the Dismal The Skirts of it were thinly Planted with Dwarf Reeds and Gall-Bushes, but when we got into the Dismal itself, we found the Reeds grew there much taller and closer, and, to mend the matter was so interlac'd with bamobriars, that there was no scuffling thro' them without the help of Pioneers At the same time, we found the Ground moist and trembling under our feet like a Quagmire, inso-much that it was an easy Matter to run a Ten-Foot-Pole up to the Head in it, without exerting any uncommon Strength to do it

Two of the Men, whose Burthens were the least cumbersome, had orders to march before, with their Tomahawks, and clear the way, in order to make an Opening for the Surveyors By their Assistance we made a Shift to push the Line half a Mile in 3 Hours, and then reacht a small piece of firm Land, about 100 Yards wide, Standing up above the rest like an Island Here the people were glad to lay down

<sup>1</sup> a bark containing quinine  
<sup>2</sup> ipecacuanha or ipecac

their Loads and take a little refreshment, while the happy man, whose lot it was to carry the Jugg of Rum, began already, like Aesop's Bread-Carriers to find it grow a good deal lighter

After reposing about an Hour, the Commissioners recommended Vigour and Constancy to their Fellow-Travellers, by whom they were answer'd with 3 Cheerful Huzzas, in Token of Obedience. This Ceremony was no sooner over but they took up their Burthens and attended the Motion of the Surveyors, who, tho' they workt with all their might, could reach but one Mile farther, the same obstacles still attending them which they had met with in the Morning

However small this distance may seem to such as are us'd to travel at their Ease, yet our Poor Men, who were oblig'd to work with an unwieldy Load at their Backs, had reason to think it a long way, Especially in a Bogg where they had no firm Footing, but every Step made a deep Impression, which was instantly fill'd with Water At the same time they were labouring with their Hands to cut down the Reeds, which were Ten-feet high, their Legs were hampered with the Bryars. Besides, the Weather happen'd to be very warm, and the tallness of the Reeds kept off every Friendly Breeze from coming to refresh them And, indeed, it was a little provoking to hear the Wind whistling among the Branches of the White Cedars, which grew here and there amongst the Reeds, and at the same time not have the Comfort to feel the least Breath of it.

In the mean time the 3 Commissioners return'd out of the Dismal the same way they went in, and having join'd their Brethren, proceeded that Night as far as Mr. Wilson's

This worthy Person lives within sight of the Dismal, in the Skirts whereof his Stocks range and Maintain themselves all the Winter, and yet he knew as little of it as he did of Terra Australis Incognita. He told us a Canterbury Tale of a North Briton, whose Curiosity Spurr'd him a long way into this great Desert, as he call'd it, near 20 Years ago, but he having no Compass, nor seeing the Sun for several Days Together, wander'd about till he was almost famisht, but at last he bethought him-

self of a Secret his Countrymen make use of to Pilot themselves in a Dark day.

He took a fat Louse out of his Collar, and expos'd it to the open day on a Piece of White Paper, which he brought along with him for his Journal The poor Insect having no Eye-lids, turn'd himself about till he found the Darkest Part of the Heavens, and so made the best of his way towards the North By this Direction he Sterr'd himself Safe out, and gave such a frightful account of the Monsters he saw, and the Distresses he underwent, that no mortall Since has been hardy enough to go upon the like dangerous Discovery

15. The Surveyors pursued their work with all Diligence, but Still found the Soil of the Dismal so Spongy that the Water ouzed up into every foot-step they took To their Sorrow, too, they found the Reeds and Bryars more firmly interwoven than they did the day before But the greatest Grievance was from large Cypresses, which the Wind had blown down and heap'd upon one another On the Limbs of most of them grew Sharp Snags, Pointing every way like so many Pikes, that requir'd much Pains and Caution to avoid

These Trees being Evergreens, and Shooting their Large Tops Very high, are easily overset by every Gust of Wind, because there is no firm Earth to Steddy their Roots Thus many of them were laid prostrate to the great Encumbrance of the way Such Variety of Difficulties made the Business go on heavily, insomuch that, from Morning till Night, the Line could advance no further than 1 Mile and 31 Poles Never was Rum, that cordial of Life, found more necessary than it was in this Dirty Place It did not only recruit the People's Spirits, now almost Jaded with Fatigue, but serv'd to correct the Badness of the Water, and at the same time to resist the Malignity of the Air. Whenever the Men wanted to drink, which was very often, they had nothing more to do but to make a Hole, and the Water bubbled up in a Moment. But it was far from being either clear or well tasted, and had besides a Physical Effect, from the Tincture it receiv'd from the Roots of the Shrubs and Trees that grew in the Neighbourhood

### [North Carolina Hospitality]

While the Surveyors were thus painfully employ'd, the Commissioners discharged the long Score they had with Mr. Wilson, for the Men and Horses which had been quarter'd upon him during our Expedition to Coratuck. From thence we march'd in good Order along the East Side of the Dismal, and passt the long Bridge that lies over the South Branch of Elizabeth River At the End of 18 Miles we reacht Timothy Ivy's Plantation, where we pitch'd our Tent for the first Time, and were furnisht with every thing the Place afforded

We perceiv'd the happy Effects of Industry in this Family, in which every one lookt tidy and clean, and carri'd in their countenances the cheerful Marks of Plenty. We saw no Drones there, which are but too Common, alas, in that Part of the World. Tho', in truth, the Distemper of Laziness seizes the Men oftener much than the Women. These last Spin, weave and knit, all with their own Hands, while their Husbands, depending on the Bounty of the Climate, are Sloathfull in every thing but getting of Children, and in that only Instance make themselves useful Members of an Infant-Colony

There is but little Wool in that Province, tho' Cotton grows very kindly, and, so far South, is Seldom nippt by the Frost. The Good Women mix this with their Wool for their outer Garments, tho', for want of Fulling, that kind of Manufacture is Open and Sleazy Flax likewise thrives there extreamly, being perhaps as fine as any in the World, and I question not might, with a little care, and pains, be brought to rival that of Egypt, and yet the Men are here so intolerable Lazy, they seldom take the trouble to propagate it.

16 The Line was this day carry'd one Mile and half and 16 Poles. The Soil continued soft and Miry, but fuller of Trees, especially White cedars. Many of these too were thrown down and piled in Heaps, high enough for a good Muscovite Fortification. The worst of it was, the Poor Fellows began now to be troubled with Fluxes, occasion'd by bad Water and moist Lodgings but chewing of Rhubarb kept that Malady within Bounds.

In the mean time the Commissioners decamp't early in the Morning, and made a March of 25 Miles, as far as Mr Andrew Mead's, who lives upon Nansimond River. They were no sooner got under the Shelter of that Hospitable Roof, but it began to rain hard, and continued so to do great part of the Night. Thus gave them much Pain for their Friends in the Dismal, whose sufferings spoil their Taste for the good Chear, wherewith they were entertained themselves.

However, late that Evening, these poor Men had the Fortune to come upon another Terra-firma, which was the Luckyer for them, because the Lower ground, by the rain that fell, was made a fitter Lodging for Tadpoles than men.

In our Journey we remarkt that the North Side of this great Swamp lies higher than either the East or the West, nor were the approaches to it so full of Sunken Grounds. We pass'd by no less than two Quaker Meeting Houses, one of which had an Awkward Ornament on the West End of it, that seem'd to Ape a Steeple. I must own I expected no such Piece of Foppery from a Sect of so much outside Simplicity.

That persuasion prevails much in the lower end of Nansimond county, for want of Ministers to Pilot the People a decenter way to Heaven.

The ill Reputation of Tobacco planted in those lower Parishes makes the Clergy unwilling to accept of them, unless it be such whose abilities are as mean as their Pay. Thus, whether the Churches be quite void or but indifferently filled, the Quakers will have an Opportunity of gaining Proselytes. 'Tis a wonder no Popish Missionaries are sent from Maryland to labour in this Neglected Vineyard, who we know have Zeal enough to traverse Sea and Land on the Meritorious Errand of making converts.

Nor is it less Strange that some Wolf in Sheep's clothing arrives not from New England to lead astray a Flock that has no shepherd. People uninstructed in any Religion are ready to embrace the first that offers. 'Tis natural for helpless man to adore his Maker in Some Form or other, and were there any exception to this Rule, I should expect it to be

among the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope and of North Carolina.

There fell a great deal of Rain in the Night, accompany'd with a Strong Wind. The fellow-feeling we had for the poor Dismalites, on Account of this unkind Weather, render'd the Down we laid upon uneasy. We fancy'd them half-drown'd in their Wet Lodging, with the Trees blowing down about their Ears. These Were the Gloomy Images our Fears Suggested, tho' 'twas so much uneasiness clear again. They happen'd to come of much better, by being luckily encamp't on the dry piece of Ground afore-mention'd.

17 They were, however, forc't to keep the Sabbath in Spite of their Teeth, contrary to the Dispensation our good Chaplain had given them. Indeed, their Short allowance of Provision would have justify'd their making the best of their way, without Distinction of days. 'Twas certainly a Work both of Necessity and Self-preservation, to save themselves from Starving. Nevertheless, the hard Rain had made everything so thoroughly wet, that it was quite impossible to do any Business. They therefore made a virtue of what they could not help, and contentedly rested in their dry situation.

Since the Surveyors had enter'd the Dismal they had laid Eyes on no living Creature neither Bird nor Beast, Insect nor Reptile came in View. Doubtless, the Eternal Shade that broods over this mighty Bog, and hinders the sun-beams from blessing the Ground, makes it an uncomfortable Habitation for any thing that has life. Not so much as a Zealand Frog cou'd endure so Aguish a Situation.

It had one Beauty, however, that delighted the Eye, tho' at the Expense of all the other Senses: the Moisture of the Soil preserves a continual Verdure, and makes every Plant an Evergreen, but at the same time the foul Damps ascend without ceasing, corrupt the Air, and render it unfit for Respiration. Not even a Turkey-Buzzard will venture to fly over it, no more than the Italian Vultures will over the filthy Lake Avernus, or the Birds in the Holy-Land over the Salt Sea, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood.

In these sad Circumstances, the Kindest

thing we cou'd do for our Suffering Friends was to give them a place in the Litany. Our Chaplain, for his Part, did his Office, and rubb'd us up with a Seasonable Sermon. This was quite a new thing to our Brethren of North Carolina, who live in a climate where no clergyman can Breathe, any more than Spiders in Ireland

For want of men in Holy Orders, both the Members of the Council and Justices of the Peace are empower'd by the Laws of that Country to marry all those who will not take One another's Word, but for the ceremony of Christening their children, they trust that to chance If a Parson come in their way, they will crave a Cast of his office, as they call it, else they are content their Offspring should remain as Arrant Pagans as themselves They account it among their greatest advantages that they are not Priest-ridden, not remembering that the Clergy is rarely guilty of Bestriding such as have the misfortune to be poor

One thing may be said for the Inhabitants of that Province, that they are not troubled with any Religious Fumes, and have the least Superstition of any People living They do not know Sunday from any other day, any more than Robinson Crusoe did, which would give them a great Advantage were they given to be industrious But they keep so many Sabbaths every week, that their disregard of the Seventh Day has no manner of cruelty in it, either to Servants or Cattle

It was with some difficulty we cou'd make our People quit the good cheer they met with at this House, so it was late before we took our Departure, but to make us amends, our Landlord was so good as to conduct us Ten Miles on our Way, as far as the Cypress Swamp, which drains itself into the Dismal Eight Miles beyond that we forded the Waters of Coropeak, which tend the same way as do many others on that side. In Six Miles more we reacht the Plantation of Mr. Thomas Spight, a Grandee of N Carolina We found the good Man upon his Crutches, being crippled with the Gout in both his Knees Here we flatter'd ourselves we should by this time meet with good Tydings of the Surveyors, but had reckon'd, alas! without our Host: on the Contrary, we were told the Dismal was

at least Thirty Miles wide at that Place. However, as nobody could say this on his own Knowledge, we Order'd Guns to be fired and a Drum to be beaten, but receiv'd no Answer, unless it was from that prating Nymph Echo, who, like a loquacious Wife, will always have the last Word, and Sometimes return three for one

18 It was indeed no Wonder our Signal was not heard at that time, by the People in the Dismal, because, in Truth they had not then penetrated one Third of their way They had that Morning fallen to work with great Vigour, and, finding the Ground better than Ordinary, drove on the Line 2 Miles and 38 poles. This was reckon'd an Herculean day's Work, and yet they would not have Stopp'd there, had not an impenetrable cedar Thicket chekt their Industry Our Landlord had seated Himself on the Borders of this Dismal, for the Advantage of the Green Food His Cattle find there all Winter, and for the Rooting that Supports His Hogs This, I own, is some convenience to his Purse, for which his whole Family pay dear in their Persons, for they are devoured by musketas all the Summer, and have Agues every Spring and Fall, which Corrupt all the Juices of their Bodies, give them a cadaverous complexion, and besides a lazy, creeping Habit, which they never get rid of

19. We Ordered Several Men to Patrole on the Edge of the Dismal, both towards the North and towards the South, and to fire Guns at proper Distances. This they perform'd very punctually, but cou'd hear nothing in return, nor gain any Sort of Intelligence In the mean time whole Flocks of Women and Children flew hither to Stare at us, with as much curiosity as if we had lately Landed from Bantam or Morocco.

Some Borderers, too, had a great Mind to know where the Line wou'd come out, being for the most part Apprehensive lest their Lands Should be taken into Virginia In that case they must have submitted to some Sort of Order and Government, whereas, in N Carolina, every One does what seems best in his own Eyes There were some good Women that brought their children to be Baptiz'd, but



brought no Capons along with them to make the solemnity cheerful. In the mean time it was Strange that none came to be marry'd in such a Multitude, if it had only been for the Novelty of having their Hands Joyn'd by one in Holy Orders. Yet so it was, that tho' our chaplain

Christen'd above an Hundred, he did not marry so much as one Couple during the whole Expedition But marriage is reckon'd a Lay contract in Carolina, as I said before, and a Country Justice can tie the fatal Knot there, as fast as an Arch-Bishop

1841

## 1703 -- Jonathan Edwards -- 1758

JONATHAN EDWARDS, greatest of American theologians, was the son of the minister at East Winsor, Connecticut. As a boy he showed, in his essays on the flying spider and on thunder, an intellectual zest and acumen and accuracy of observation which promised greater achievement in natural science than that of his contemporary, Franklin. At Yale, seminary of orthodox Calvinism, he read Locke and Newton and was a fellow student with Samuel Johnson, the idealistic philosopher. Graduated at seventeen, and continuing with two years' study of theology, he underwent an ecstatic experience of conversion and conviction of his own election to be saved. His *Personal Narrative* records in this period moods of spiritual aliveness and rapt enjoyment of nature which show his partial kinship with such later transcendental spirits as Wordsworth, Emerson, and Thoreau. After a brief term as pastor of a Presbyterian church in New York, he returned to Yale for two years as tutor. In 1736 he became the colleague of his mother's father, Solomon Stoddard, the distinguished pastor of the church in Northampton, Massachusetts. The next year he married Sarah Pierrepont, whose singular sweetness and purity of mind he had recorded four years earlier.

Edwards was a scholarly pastor, rarely visiting his parishioners, and usually spending thirteen hours a day at his books and writing. His sermons, however, were eloquent and compelling. His preaching, while restrained in delivery, became increasingly evangelistic in spirit, in contrast with the customarily doctrinal sermons of his Calvinist associates. He anticipated the Great Awakening with a remarkable religious revival in his parish in 1734 and became one of its most powerful preachers. His own congregation gained three hundred members in six months. He defended the revival, based on an appeal to the emotions or "religious affections," in answer to attacks by the Reverend Charles Chauncy and others but admitted that in some cases the apparent evidences of conversion were "enthusiastic delusions," arising from the natural emotions rather than from the "supernatural sense" granted by God to the elect for their complete regeneration, as described in his *Treatise concerning Religious Affections* (1746).

Edwards's own parishioners, after their enthusiasm had cooled, became critical of their pastor's strictness, not in his picturing of hell, but in "the high level of religious emotion which he expected them to maintain in their daily lives." After two years of dissension, he delivered his "Farewell Sermon" in 1750 and withdrew with his numerous family to the frontier town of Stockbridge, where he acted as missionary to the Indians and preached in the local church. In his seclusion here, he had opportunity to devote himself to study and turned out the notable treatises *The Nature of True Virtue*, *The End for Which God Created the World*, and *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended*, and his masterpiece, *The Freedom of the Will* (1754). In 1757 recognition of his intellectual leadership among the Calvinists took the form of an invitation to become president of the new Presbyterian College of New Jersey (now Princeton). Three months after his induction, he died of smallpox as the result of inoculation.

Edwards returned to a purer Calvinism than that of the early New England Puritans. The central idea in his preaching and writing was the ineffable power and majesty of God, the contemplation of which never failed to entrance his mind and fill it with joy. That the nature of humankind, in contrast with God's goodness and might, is deplorably black and weak, and that man can be saved only through the interposition of divine grace, are ideas inherent in the Calvinistic system. His participation in the Great Awakening arose not from the evangelical hope that all men could repent and save themselves but from the feeling that the religious exaltation which was stimulated, when genuine, expressed "the kind of religion toward which a recognition of the sovereignty of God would tend." In denying to man any control over his will or desires—as distinct from his actions—Edwards occupied a position close to that of Locke and Hobbes. His explanation of total depravity as resulting from domination by the sole motive of self-love, after God withdrew from Adam's nature the divine motive of disinterested benevolence, harmonizes again with the views of Hobbes and with those of Mandeville. His later identification of true virtue, possible only in the elect, with this benevolence, achieved through the divinely given sense of moral beauty, seems suggested by Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725).

The synthesis of these views made a virtually impregnable fortress of logic for the Calvinistic theology of total dependence upon God. But though most men found his conclusions inescapable, they also found them intolerable, with the ultimate result of the rejection of the premises on which they were founded. This rejection of the validity of the Calvinistic dogma left the way open for the later triumph of Unitarianism in New England.

Around his sixteenth year, Edwards set down a set of rules for writing, which reflect, in their emphasis on unaffected simplicity, the precepts for good prose by

Hobbes and Thomas Sprat—"a close, naked, natural way of speaking"—and the practice of Defoe, Swift, Steele, and Addison:

Let much modesty be seen in the style . . .

To be very moderate in the use of terms of art. Let it not look as if I was much read, or was conversant with books, or with the learned world.

As he progressed, the language of those books of the Bible from which texts for his sermons were most frequently chosen—the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the New Testament gospels—shows its influence in his description of his emotional experiences and in his hortatory sermons. Late in his life, a reading of Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* prompted the remark that he regretted not having given more attention to his style. He was never unaware of its effects, however, and the almost lyrical beauty of the *Personal Narrative* and the clear and precise diction of his philosophical treatises rank him with Franklin as one of the two best prose writers in eighteenth-century America.

Edwards's chief works *God Glorified in the Work of Redemption* (1731), *A Faithful Narrative* (1737), *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (1741), *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1742), *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746), *Farewell Sermon* (1750), *The Freedom of the Will* (1751), *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* (1758), *A Dissertation Concerning the Nature of Free Virtue* (1788), and *A Dissertation Concerning the End for which God Created the World* (1788)

The best of a number of editions of Edwards's works is the one edited by S. Austin in 8 vols. (1808–09) and reprinted with additions by R. Ogle in 1847. The first four volumes were reissued in 1843 and frequently since then. Excellent volumes of selections with valuable introductions are C. H. Faust and T. H. Johnson, *Jonathan Edwards Representative Selections* (1935), and Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards Selections from Their Writings* (1920). *Selected Sermons of Jonathan Edwards* was edited by H. N. Gardiner (1904). Faust and Johnson's *Edwards* contains an extensive bibliography. There are also bibliographies in *CHAL*, I, 428–432 (Edwards's separate works), and in *DAB*.

The standard life is A. V. G. Allen (1890). Other full-length biographies are Sereno E. Dwight, in Vol. I of the *Works*, edited by Dwight (1829); H. B. Parkes, *Jonathan Edwards, the Fiery Puritan* (1930), and A. C. McGiffert, *Jonathan Edwards* (1932). The *DAB* article by Francis A. Christie is an excellent summary. Other valuable material may be found in H. S. Canby, *Classic Americans* (1931), F. I. Carpenter, "The Radicalism of Jonathan Edwards," *New England Quarterly*, IV, 629–644 (Oct., 1931); W. H. Channing, "Jonathan Edwards and the Revivalists," *Christian Examiner*, XLIII (4th series, VIII), 374–394 (Nov., 1857), M. M. Curtiss, *An Outline of Philosophy in America*, reprinted from the *Western Reserve Bulletin*, March, 1896, John Dewitt, "Jonathan Edwards, a Study," *Princeton Theological Review*, II, 88–109 (Jan., 1904), F. B. Dexter, "On the Manuscripts of Jonathan Edwards," *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, 2nd series, XV, 2–16 (1902), G. P. Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine* (1896), and "The Value of Edwards for Today," *Congregationalist and Christian World*, LXXXVIII, 469–472 (Oct. 3, 1903), F. H. Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Theology* (1907), Joseph Haroutunian, "Jonathan Edwards, a Study in Godliness," *Journal of Religion*, XI, 400–419 (July, 1931), and *Pieté versus*

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### THE FLYING SPIDER

This is one of a remarkable group of essays, including also "Of Thunder" and "Of the Rainbow," which Edwards wrote as a boy of eleven or twelve years. They are not merely precocious—there are numerous examples of Colonial children who mastered sufficient Latin, Greek, mathematics, and divinity to qualify for entrance to college. But the intellectual curiosity, maturity of reasoning, and exactness of observation without the aid of instruments of precision shown here is startling. The boy's father, the Reverend Timothy Edwards, asked him to set down his observations to send to a friend in England, and the version here given is based upon Edwards's original text. It is modernized in spelling and punctuation, and long loose sentences have in a few cases been broken for ease of retention, but the wording is unaltered. Aside from its childish length of loose sentences—many of which exhibit unusual ability to keep a thought in mind until its development is completed—the style is already clear and systematic.

Of all insects no one is more wonderful than the spider, especially with respect to their sagacity and admirable way of working. These spiders, for the present, shall be distinguished into those that keep in houses and those that keep in forests, upon trees, bushes, shrubs, &c., and those that keep in rotten logs, for I take them to be of very different kinds and natures, there are also other sorts, some of which keep in rotten logs, hollow

trees, swamps, and grass. Of these last, every one knows the truth of their marching in the air from tree to tree, and these sometimes at five or six rods distance, nor can any one go out amongst the trees in a dewy morning towards the latter end of August or at the beginning of September but that he shall see hundreds of webs made conspicuous by the dew that is lodged upon them, reaching from one tree & shrub to another that stand at a considerable distance, and they may be seen well enough by an observing eye at noonday by their glistening against the sun. And what is still more wonderful, I know I have several times seen in a very calm and serene day at that time of year, standing behind some opaque body that shall just hide the disk of the sun and keep off his dazzling rays from my eye, and looking close by the side of it, multitude of little shining webs and glistening strings of a great length and at such a height as that one would think they were tacked to the sky by one end, were it not that they were moving and floating. And there very often appears at the end of these webs a spider floating and sailing in the air with them, which I have plainly discerned in those webs that were nearer to my eye, and once saw a very large spider to my surprise swimming in the air in this manner, and others have assured me that they often have seen spiders fly.

The appearance is truly very pretty and pleasing, and it was so pleasing as well as surprising to me that I resolved to endeavor to satisfy my curiosity about it by finding out the way and manner of their doing of it, being also persuaded that if I could find out how they flew I could easily find out how they made webs from tree to tree. And accordingly, at a time when I was in the woods, I happened to see one of these spiders on a bush. So I went to the bush and shook it, hoping thereby to make him uneasy upon it and provoke him to leave it by flying, and took good care that he should not get off from it any other way. So I continued constantly to shake it, which made him several times let himself fall by his web a little, but he would presently creep up again till at last he was pleased, however, to leave that bush and march along in the air to the next, but which way I did not know, nor could I conceive, but resolved to watch him more narrowly next time. So I brought him back to the same bush again and, to be sure that there was nothing for him to go upon the next time, I whisked about a stick I had in my hand on all sides of the bush that I might break any web going from it, if there were any, and leave nothing else for him to go on but the clear air, and then shook the bush as before. But it was not long before he again, to my surprise, went to the next bush. I took him off upon my stick and, holding of him near my eye, shook the stick as I had done the bush, whereupon he let himself down a little, hanging by his web and I presently perceived a web out from his tail a good way into the air. I took hold of it with my hand and broke it off, not knowing but that I might take it out to the stick with him from the bush. But then I plainly perceived another such a string to proceed out of his tail.

I now conceived I had found out the whole mystery. I repeated the trial over and over again till I was fully satisfied of his way of working, which I don't only conjecture to be on this wise, viz., they, when they would go from tree to tree or would sail in the air, let themselves hang down a little way by their web and then put out a web at their tails which, being so exceeding rare when it first comes from the spider as to be lighter than the air so

as of itself it will ascend in it (which I know by experience), the moving air takes it by the end and by the spider's permission pulls it out of his tail to any length, and, if the further end of it happens to catch by a tree or any thing, why there's a web for him to go over upon, and the spider immediately perceives it and feels when it touches, much after the same manner as the soul in the brain immediately perceives when any of those little nervous strings that proceed from it are in the least jarred by external things, and thus very way I have seen spiders go from one thing to another I believe fifty times at least, since I first discovered it. But if nothing is in the way of these webs to hinder their flying out at a sufficient distance, and they don't catch by anything, there will be so much of it drawn out into the air as by its ascending force there will be enough to carry the spider with it, or which is all one now, there is so much of this web which is rarer than the air as that the web taken with the spider shall take up as much or more space than the same quantity of which, if it be equal, they together will be in a perfect equilibrium or poise with the air so as that when they are loose therein they will neither ascend nor descend but only as they are driven by the wind, but, if they together be more, will ascend therein, like as a man at the bottom of the sea if he has hold on a stick of wood or any thing that is lighter or takes up more space for the quantity of matter than the water. If it be a little piece, it may not be enough to carry him and cause him to swim therein, but if there be enough of it, it will carry him up to the surface of the water. If there be so much as that the greater rarity shall more than counterbalance the greater density of the man, and if it doth but just cause to balance, put the man anywhere in the water and there he'll keep without ascending or descending. 'Tis just so with the spider in the air as with the man in the water, for what is lighter than the air will swim or ascend therein as well as that which is lighter than the water swims in that, and if a spider has hold on so much of a web that the greater levity of all of it shall more than counterpoise the greater gravity of the spider, so that the ascending force of the web shall be more than

the descending force of the spider, the web, by its ascending, will necessarily carry the spider up unto such a height as that the air shall be so much thinner and lighter, as that the lightness of the web with the spider shall no longer prevail.

Now, perhaps here it will be asked how the spider knows when he has put out web enough, and when he does know, how does he get himself loose from the web by which he hung to the trees? I answer there is no occasion for the spider's knowing, for their manner is to let out their web until the ascending force of their web, and the force the wind has upon it, together with the weight of the spider, shall be enough to break the web by which the spider hung to the tree, for the stress of all these comes upon that, and nature has so provided that just so much web as is sufficient to break that shall be sufficient to carry the spider. And this very way I very frequently have seen spiders mount away into the air with a vast train of glistening web before them, from a stick in my hand, and have also shewed it to others and without doubt they do it with a great deal of their sort of pleasure.

There remain only two difficulties. The one is, how should they first begin to spin out this so fine and even a thread of their bodies? If once there is a web out, it is easy to conceive how, if the end of it were once out, the air might take it and so draw it out to a greater length. But, how should they at first let out of their tails the end of a fine string, when in all probability the web, while it is in the spider, is a certain liquor with which that great bottle tail of theirs is filled, which, immediately upon being exposed to the air, turns to a dry substance and very much rarefies, and extends itself. Now if it be a liquor, it is hardly conceivable how they should let out a fine string except by expelling a small drop at the end of it. But none such can be discovered. To find out this difficulty, I once got a very large spider of the sort, for in lesser ones I could not distinctly discern how they did theirs nor can one discern their webs at all, except they are held up against the sun or some dark place. I took this spider and held him up against an open door, which, being

dark, helped me plainly to discern, and shook him, whereupon he let himself down by his web . . . and then with his tail fixed one end of the web that he intended to let out into the air to the web, by which he let himself down . . . , then pulling away his tail. One end of the web was thereby drawn out, which, being at first exceeding slender, the wind presently broke it . . . and drew it out . . . , and it was immediately spun out to a very great length. The other difficulty is how, when they are once carried up into the air, how they get down again, or whether they are necessitated to continue till they are beat down by some shower of rain without any sustenance which [is] not probable nor agreeable to natural providence. I answer, there is a way whereby they may come down again when they please by only gathering in their webs into them again, by which way they may come down gradually and gently; but whether that be their way or no, I can't say, but without scruple that or a better, for we always find things done by nature as well or better, than [we] can imagine beforehand.

Coroll: We hence see the exuberant goodness of the Creator, who hath not only provided for all the necessities but also for the pleasure and recreation of all sorts of creatures and even the insects and those that are most despicable.

Another thing particularly notable and worthy of being inquired into about these webs is that they, which are so exceeding small and fine as that they cannot be discerned except held in a particular position with respect to the sun, or against some dark place when held close to the eye, should appear at such a prodigious height in the air, when near betwixt us and the sun, so that they must needs, some of 'em, appear as big as a cable would do if it appeared exactly, *secundum rationem distantiae*.<sup>1</sup> To solve, we ought to consider that these webs, as they are thus posited very vividly, reflect the rays of the sun so as to cause them to be very lightsome bodies, and then see if we can't find any parallel phaenomena in other lightsome bodies; and everybody knows that a candle in the night appears exceedingly bigger at a distance

<sup>1</sup> according to the ratio of the distance

than it ought to do. And we may observe in the moon, towards the new, when that part of it that is not enlightened by the sun is visible, how much the enlightened part thereof is enlarged and extended beyond the circumference of the other part, and astronomers also know how exceedingly the fixed stars are beyond their bounds to our naked eye, so that without doubt they appear many hundreds of times bigger than they ought to do. The reason may be that the multitude and powerfulness of the rays affects a greater part of the retina than their space which they immediately strike upon, but we find that a light that so does when it is alone and when no part of the retina is affected by anything else but that, so that the least impression is felt by it, won't do so, or at least not so much in the midst of other, perhaps greater, light, so that other parts of the retina are filled with impressions of their own. But these webs are an instance of the latter, so that this reason does not seem fully to solve this so great a magnifying thought. Without doubt that helps, but the chief reason must be referred [to] that incurvation of the rays passing by the edge of any body which Sir Isaac Newton has proved.

One thing more I shall take notice of before I dismiss this subject, concerning the end of nature in giving spiders this way of flying, which, though we have found, in the corollary, to be their pleasure and recreation, yet we think a greater end is at last their destruction. And what makes us think so is because that is necessarily and actually brought to pass by it, and we shall find nothing so brought to pass by nature but what is the end of those means by which it is brought to pass. And we shall further evince it by and by, by shewing [ing] the great usefulness of it, but we must shew how their destruction is brought to pass by it. I say, then, that by this means almost all the spiders upon the land must necessarily be swept first and last into the sea, for we have observed already that they never fly except in fair weather, and we may now observe that it is never fair weather, neither in this country nor any other, except when the wind blows from the midland parts and so towards the sea. So here in New England I have observed

that they never fly except when the wind is westerly, and I never saw them fly but when they were hastening directly towards the sea, and, [the] time of the flying being so long, even from the middle of August to the middle of October—though their chief time here in New England is in the time, as was said before, towards the latter end of August and the beginning of September—and they keep flying all that while towards the sea, must needs almost all of them get there before they have done. And the same indeed holds true of all other sort of flying insects, for at that time of year, the ground, trees, and houses, the places of their residence in summer, being pretty chill, they leave 'em whenever the sun shines pretty warm and mount up into the air and expand their wings to the sun, and so flying for nothing but their ease and comfort, they suffer themselves to go that way that they find they can go with greatest ease and so, wheresoever the wind pleases. And besides, it being warmth they fly for, and it being warmer flying with the wind than against it or sideways to it—for thereby the wind has less power upon them—and as was said of spiders, they never fly but when the winds that blow from the midland parts towards the sea bring fair weather, they must necessarily, flying so long a time all the while towards the sea, get there at last. And I very well remember that at the same time, when I have been viewing the spiders with their webs, in the air I also saw vast multitudes of flies, many of 'em at a great height, all flying the same way with the spiders and webs, directly seaward. And I have many times at that time of year, looking westward, seen myriads of them towards sunset, flying continually towards the sea, and thus I believe almost everybody, specially of my own country, will call to mind that they have also seen, and as to other sorts of flying insects, such as butterflies, millers, moths, &c., I remember that when I was a boy, I have at the same time of year, lain on the ground upon my back and beheld abundance of them busy, all flying southeast, which I then thought was going to a warm country, so that without any doubt almost all of all manner of aerial insects, and also spiders which live upon them and are

made up of them, are at the end of the year, swept and wafted into the sea and buried in the ocean, and leave nothing behind them but their eggs for a new stock the next year

Coroll. Hence also we may behold and admire at the wisdom of the Creator and be convinced from Providence there is exercised about such little things, in this wonderful contrivance of annually carrying off and burying the corrupting nauseousness of our air, of which flying insects are little collections, in the bottom of ocean, where it will do no harm; and especially the strange way of bringing this about in spiders (which are collections of these collections, their food being flying insects), which want wings whereby it might be done, and what great inconveniences should we labor under if there were no such way, for spiders and flies are so exceeding multiplying creatures that if they only slept or lay benumbed in [winter] and were raised again in the spring, which is commonly supposed, it would not be many years before we should be as much plagued with their vast numbers as Egypt was, and if they died for good and all in winter, they, by the renewed heat of the sun, would presently again be dissipated into those nauseous vapors of which they are made up of, and so would be of no use or benefit in that [way in] which now they are so very serviceable

Coroll 2 Admire also the Creator in so nicely and mathematically adjusting their multiplying nature that, notwithstanding their destruction by this means, and the multitudes that are eaten by birds, that they do not decrease and so by little and little come to nothing, and in so adjusting their destruction to their multiplication that they do neither increase but, taking one year with another, there is always just an equal number of them.

Another reason why they will not fly at any other time but when a dry wind blows, is because a moist wind moistens the web, and makes it heavier than the air, and if they had the sense to fly themselves, we should have hundreds of times more spiders and flies by the seashore than anywhere else.

1715

## PERSONAL NARRATIVE

The account of Edwards's own conversion, about 1723, was written about twenty years later. It will be helpful to compare Edwards's thoughts and experiences with Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* and passages in Emerson's *Nature* and Thoreau's *Journals*

[*Boyhood Experiences*]

I HAD a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood, but had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys, and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure, and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I, with some of my schoolmates, joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself, and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off, and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it, and returned like a dog to his vomit and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed, I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college, when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy, in which he brought me nigh to the grave and

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shook me over the pit of hell. And yet it was not long after my recovery before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness, I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways and all ways of known outward sin, and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties, but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner, which has made me sometimes since to question whether ever it issued in that which was saving, being ready to doubt whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before, I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased, leaving them eternally to perish and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it, and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind in respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty

from that day to this, so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God's showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes, at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17 *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen*. As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being, a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be if I might enjoy that God and be rapt up to him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing, over these words of Scripture to myself, and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do, with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

### [*Transcendent Contemplations*]

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ and the work of redemption and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart, and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my

mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me as those that treated of these subjects. Those words Cant. ii. 1. used to be abundantly with me, *I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys*. The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time, and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness that would carry me away in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world, and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart, an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express.

Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together, and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there and looking upon the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction, majesty and meekness joined together, it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty, and also a majestic meekness, an awful sweetness, a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased and became more and more lively and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered, there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet, cast or appearance of divine glory in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love seemed to appear in every thing,

in the sun, moon, and stars, in the clouds and blue sky, in the grass, flowers, trees, in the water and all nature, which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance, and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things, in the meantime singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning, formerly nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising, but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder-storm, and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds and see the lightnings play and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural for me to sing, or chant forth my meditations, or to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

I felt then great satisfaction as to my good estate, but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full and ready to break, which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28. *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath*. I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things, almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things year after year, often walking alone in the woods and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God, and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now

felt in the things of religion were of an exceedingly different kind from those before-mentioned, that I had when a boy, and what I then had no more notion of than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colors. They were of a more inward, pure soul, animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart, and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God, or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase until I went to preach at New York, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be, in every thing, a complete Christian, and conformed to the blessed image of Christ, and that I might live in all things according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the Gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things, which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night and constant inquiry how I should *be* more holy and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness and a holy life with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself and studying and contriving for likely ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life, but yet with too great a dependence upon my own strength, which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way, and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness and conformity to Christ.

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness—to be with God and to spend my eternity in divine love and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with

contemplations on heaven and the enjoyments there, and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love, and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness, and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes." It appeared to me that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely, the highest beauty and smateness—a *divine* beauty, far purer than any thing here upon earth and that every thing else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature, which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and rapture to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers, all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed, enjoying a sweet calm and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year, low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory, rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture, diffusing around a sweet fragrant, standing peacefully and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round about, all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature-holiness that I had so great a sense of its loveliness as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie

low before God, as in the dust, that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child

While at New York, I sometimes was much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious, and how wickedly I had lived till then, and once so as to weep abundantly and for a considerable time together

On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God and wrote it down, giving up myself and all that I had to God, to be for the future in no respect my own, to act as one that had no right to himself in any respect And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness nor acting as if it were, and his law for the constant rule of my obedience, engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life But I have reason to be infinitely humbled when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation . . .

Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God as Mediator between God and man and his wonderful, great, full, pure, and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour, which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated, to lie in the dust and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love, to trust in him, to live upon him, to serve and follow him, and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature and which have had the same effects.

I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier, in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness, being full and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul, pouring forth itself in sweet communications, like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God as a word of life, as the light of life, a sweet, excellent, life-giving word, accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

### *[Sense of Sinfulness]*

Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness, very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together, so that I have often been forced to shut myself up I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness and the badness of my own heart than ever I had before my conversion It has often appeared to me that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind, of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time, and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell When others that have come to talk with me about their soul concerns have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness by saying that it seemed to them that they were as bad as the devil himself, I thought their expression seemed exceedingly faint and feeble to represent my wickedness.

My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable and swallowing up all thought and imagination, like an infinite deluge or mountain over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be than by heaping infinite upon infinite and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind and in my mouth, "Infinite upon infinite—Infinite upon infinite!" When I look into my heart and take a view of

my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself, far beyond the sight of every thing but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet, it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small and faint, it is enough to amaze me that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I thought I knew at the time that my repentance was nothing to my sin

I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart and to lie low before God, and when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be "humbled to the dust", that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, "to lie infinitely low before God." And it is affecting to think how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit left in my heart

I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence of God's grace and strength and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have, and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

Though it seems to me that, in some respects, I was a far better Christian for two or three years after my first conversion than I am now, and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure, yet, of late years I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God and a delight in that sovereignty, and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines that I could not but say to myself, "This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine," and of Christ, "This is my chosen Prophet." It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ and to be taught and enlightened and instructed by him, to learn of him and live to him. Another Saturday night (January, 1739), I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty, to do that which was right and meet to be done and agreeable to the holy mind of God, that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, "How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!" I had, at the same time a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world and order all things according to his own pleasure, and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned and that his will was done

c 1740

1808

## [SARAH PIERREPONT]

The following description was written, according to Sereno Dwight's *Life*, on a blank leaf in a book in 1723, when Edwards was twenty and Miss Pierrepont was thirteen, four years before they were married

THEY say there is a young lady in New Haven who is beloved of that Great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything, except

to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven, being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him and to be ravished with his love and delight forever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her with the richest of its treasures, she disregards and cares not for it and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind and singular purity in her affections, is most just and conscientious in all her conduct, and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind, especially after this great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly, and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure, and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her

1723

From A FAITHFUL NARRATIVE  
OF CONVERSIONS

[*The Case of Phebe Bartlet*]

In reply to inquiries by Dr Benjamin Colman (1673-1747), liberal pastor of the Brattle Street Church, Boston, regarding the Northampton revival, Edwards wrote a long letter regarding it on May 30, 1735, which Colman had published in 1736. Edwards expanded the letter to include the later progress of the revival, and it was published in London in 1737 as *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton and the Neighboring Towns and Villages*. The letter illustrates not only Edwards's zeal and interest in the Great Awakening but also the psychologist's observation and recording of the phenomena of conversion in general, and in specific cases, the most notable of which is that of Phebe Bartlet, given here. The whole letter is valuable as outlining the Calvinistic idea of the successive steps involved in conversion.

. . . But I now proceed to the other instance that I would give an account of, which is of

the little child forementioned. Her name is Phebe Bartlet, daughter of William Bartlet. I shall give the account as I took it from the mouths of her parents, whose veracity, none that know them doubt.

She was born in March, in the year 1731. About the latter end of April, or beginning of May, 1735, she was greatly affected by the talk of her brother, who had been hopefully converted a little before, at about eleven years of age, and then seriously talked to her about the great things of religion. Her parents did not know of it at that time, and were not wont, in the counsels they gave to their children, particularly to direct themselves to her, by reason of her being so young, and, as they supposed not capable of understanding, but after her brother had talked to her, they observed her very earnestly to listen to the advice they gave to the other children, and she was observed very constantly to retire, several times in a day, as was concluded, for secret prayer, and grew more and more engaged in religion, and was more frequent in her closet, till at last she was wont to visit it five or six times in a day, and was so engaged in it, that nothing would, at any time, divert her from her stated closet exercises. Her mother often observed and watched her, when such things occurred, as she thought most likely to divert her, either by putting it out of her thoughts, or otherwise engaging her inclinations, but never could observe her to fail. She mentioned some very remarkable instances.

She once, of her own accord, spake of her unsuccessfulness, in that she could not find God, or to that purpose. But on Thursday, the last day of July, about the middle of the day, the child being in the closet, where it used to retire, its mother heard it speaking aloud, which was unusual, and never had been observed before; and her voice seemed to be as of one exceeding importunate and engaged, but her mother could distinctly hear only these words, (spoken in her childish manner, but seemed to be spoken with extraordinary earnestness, and out of distress of soul) **BLESS'D LORD give me salvation! I PRAY, BEG pardon all my sins! When the child had done prayer, she came out of the closet, and came and sat down by her mother, and cried**

out aloud. Her mother very earnestly asked her several times, what the matter was, before she would make any answer, but she continued exceedingly crying, and wreathing her body to and fro, like one in anguish of spirit. Her mother then asked her whether she was afraid that God would not give her salvation. She then answered yes, I am afraid I shall go to hell! Her mother then endeavored to quiet her, and told her she would not have her cry, she must be a good girl, and pray every day, and she hoped God would give her salvation. But this did not quiet her at all—but she continued thus earnestly crying and taking on for some time, till at length she suddenly ceased crying and began to smile, and presently said with a smiling countenance, Mother, the kingdom of heaven is come to me! Her mother was surprised at the sudden alteration, and at the speech, and knew not what to make of it, but at first said nothing to her. The child presently spake again, and said, there is another come to me, and there is another, there is three, and being asked what she meant, she answered, One is thy will be done, and there is another, enjoy him forever, by which it seems that when the child said there is three come to me, she meant three passages of its catechism that came to her mind.

After the child had said this, she retired again into her closet, and her mother went over to her brother's, who was next neighbor, and when she came back, the child being come out of the closet, meets her mother with this cheering speech, I can find God now! Referring to what she had before complained of, that she could not find God. Then the child spoke again, and said, I love God! Her mother asked her how well she loved God, whether she loved God better than her father and mother, she said, yes. Then she asked her whether she loved God better than her little sister Rachel, she answered yes, better than any thing! Then her eldest sister, referring to her saying she could find God now, asked her where she could find God; she answered, in heaven. Why, said she, have you been in heaven? No, said the child. By this it seems not to have been any imagination of any thing seen with bodily eyes that she called God, when she said I can find God now. Her mother asked her whether

she was afraid of going to hell, and that had made her cry. She answered, yes, I was; but now I shall not. Her mother asked her whether she thought that God had given her salvation; she answered yes. Her mother asked her, when, she answered, today. She appeared all that afternoon exceeding cheerful and joyful. One of the neighbors asked her how she felt herself? She answered, I feel better than I did. The neighbor asked her what made her feel better, she answered, God makes me. That evening as she lay abed, she called one of her little cousins to her, that was present in the room, as having something to say to him; and when he came, she told him that heaven was better than earth. The next day being Friday, her mother asking her her catechism, asked her what God made her for, she answered, to serve him; and added, every body should serve God, and get an interest in Christ.

The same day the elder children, when they came home from school, seemed much affected with the extraordinary change that seemed to be made in Phebe, and her sister Abigail standing by, her mother took occasion to counsel her, now to improve her time, to prepare for another world, on which Phebe burst out in tears, and cried out, poor Nabby! Her mother told her, she would not have her cry, she hoped that God would give Nabby salvation, but that did not quiet her, but she continued earnestly crying for some time, and when she had in a measure ceased, her sister Eunice being by her, she burst out again, and cried, poor Eunice! and cried exceedingly, and when she had almost done, she went into another room, and there looked upon her sister Naomi, and burst out again, crying poor Amy! Her mother was greatly affected at such behavior in the child, and knew not what to say to her. One of the neighbors coming in a little after, asked her what she had cried for. She seemed, at first, backward to tell the reason. Her mother told her she might tell that person, for he had given her an apple, upon which she said, she cried because she was afraid they would go to hell.

At night a certain minister, that was occasionally in the town, was at the house, and talked considerably with her of the things of religion; and after he was gone, she sat leaning

on the table, with tears running out of her eyes, and being asked what made her cry, she said it was thinking about God. The next day being Saturday, she seemed great part of the day to be in a very affectionate frame, had four turns of crying, and seemed to endeavor to curb herself, and hide her tears, and was very backward to talk of the occasion of it. On the sabbath day she was asked whether she believed in God, she answered yes. And being told that Christ was the Son of God, she made ready answer, and said, I know it.

From this time there has appeared a very remarkable abiding change in the child. She has been very strict upon the sabbath, and seems to long for the sabbath day before it comes, and will often in the week time be inquiring how long it is to the sabbath day, and must have the days particularly counted over that are between, before she will be contented. And she seems to love God's house—is very eager to go thither. Her mother once asked her why she had such a mind to go? Whether it was not to see the fine folks? She said no, it was to hear Mr. Edwards preach. When she is in the place of worship, she is very far from spending her time there as children at her age usually do, but appears with an attention that is very extraordinary for such a child. She also appears very desirous at all opportunities, to go to private religious meetings, and is very still and attentive at home, in prayer time, and has appeared affected in time of family prayer. She seems to delight much in hearing religious conversation. When I once was there with some others that were strangers, and talked to her something of religion, she seemed more than ordinarily attentive, and when we were gone, she looked out very wistfully after us, and said—I wish they would come again! Her mother asked her why she said she, I love to hear them talk!

She seems to have very much of the fear of God before her eyes, and an extraordinary dread of sin against him, of which her mother mentioned the following remarkable instance. Some time in August, the last year, she went with some larger children, to get some plums in a neighbor's lot, knowing nothing of any harm in what she did; but when she brought some of the plums into the house, her mother

mildly reproved her and told her that she must not get plums without leave, because it was sin. God had commanded her not to steal. The child seemed greatly surprised, and burst out into tears, and cried out, "I will not have these plums!" And turning to her sister Eunice, very earnestly said to her, "Why did you ask me to go to that plum tree? I should not have gone if you had not asked me." The other children did not seem to be much affected or concerned; but there was no pacifying Phebe. Her mother told her she might go and ask leave, and then it would not be sin for her to eat them, and sent one of the children to that end, and when she returned, her mother told her that the owner had given leave, now she might eat them, and it would not be stealing. This stilled her a little while, but presently she broke out again into an exceeding fit of crying. Her mother asked her what made her cry again? Why she cried now, since they had asked leave? What it was that troubled her now? And asked her several times very earnestly, before she made any answer, but at last, said it was because—BECAUSE IT WAS SIN. She continued a considerable time crying, and said she would not go again if Eunice asked her an hundred times; and she retained her aversion to that fruit for a considerable time, under the remembrance of her former sin.

She, at some times, appears greatly affected and delighted with texts of scripture that come to her mind. Particularly, about the beginning of November, the last year, that text came to her mind, Rev. iii. 20 *Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and sup with him and he with me.* She spoke of it to those of the family, with a great appearance of joy, a smiling countenance, and elevation of voice, and afterwards she went into another room, where her mother overheard her talking very earnestly to the children about it, and particularly heard her say to them, three or four times over, with an air of exceeding joy and admiration—Why it is to SUP WITH GOD. At some time about the middle of winter, very late in the night, when all were in bed, her mother perceived that she was awake, and heard her as though she was weeping. She



called to her, and asked her what was the matter. She answered with a low voice, so that her mother could not hear what she said, but thinking it might be occasioned by some spiritual affection, said no more to her, but perceived her to be awake, and to continue in the same frame for a considerable time. The next morning she asked her whether she did not cry the last night. The child answered yes, I did cry a little, for I was thinking about God and Christ, and they loved me. Her mother asked her, whether to think of God and Christ's loving her made her cry. She answered yes, it does sometimes.

She has often manifested a great concern for the good of other souls, and has been wont, many times, affectionately to counsel the other children. Once about the latter end of September, the last year, when she and some others of the children were in a room by themselves husking Indian corn, the child, after a while, came out and sat by the fire. Her mother took notice that she appeared with a more than ordinary serious and pensive countenance, but at last she broke silence, and said, I have been talking to Nabby and Eunice. Her mother asked her what she had said to them. Why, said she, I told them they must pray, and prepare to die, that they had but a little while to live in this world, and they must be always ready. When Nabby came out, her mother asked her whether she had said that to them. Yes, said she, she said that and a great deal more. At other times the child took her opportunities to talk to the other children about the great concern of their souls, sometimes so as much to affect them, and set them into tears. She was once exceeding importunate with her mother to go with her sister Naomi to pray. Her mother endeavored to put her off, but she pulled her by the sleeve, and seemed as if she would by no means be denied. At last her mother told her, that Amy must go and pray herself; but, says the child, she will not go, and persisted earnestly to beg of her mother to go with her.

She has discovered an uncommon degree of a spirit of charity, particularly on the following occasion. A poor man that lives in the woods, had lately lost a cow that the family much depended on, and being at the house, he was

relating his misfortune, and telling of the straits and difficulties they were reduced to by it. She took much notice of it, and it wrought exceedingly on her compassions; and after she had attentively heard him a while, she went away to her father, who was in the shop, and entreated him to give that man a cow; and told him that the poor man had no cow! That the hunters or something else had killed his cow! And entreated him to give him one of theirs. Her father told her that they could not spare one. Then she entreated him to let him and his family come and live at his house; and had much talk of the same nature, whereby she manifested bowels of compassion to the poor.

She had manifested great love to her minister; particularly when I returned from my long journey for my health, the last fall, when she heard of it, she appeared very joyful at the news, and told the children of it with an elevated voice, as the most joyful tidings, repeating it over and over, "Mr Edwards is come home! Mr. Edwards is come home!" She still continues very constant in secret prayer, so far as can be observed, (for she seems to have no desire that others should observe her when she retires, but seems to be a child of a reserved temper) and every night before she goes to bed will say her catechism, and will by no means miss of it. She never forgot it but once, and then after she was abed, thought of it and cried out in tears, I have not said my catechism! And would not be quieted till her mother asked her the catechism as she lay in bed. She sometimes appears to be in doubt about the condition of her soul, and when asked whether she thinks that she is prepared for death, speaks something doubtfully about it. At other times seems to have no doubt, but when asked, replies "Yes," without hesitation.

### [*Satan's Revenges*]

In the former part of this great work of God amongst us, till it got to its height, we seemed to be wonderfully smiled upon and blessed in all respects. Satan (as has been already observed) seemed to be unusually restrained. Persons that before had been involved

in melancholy, seemed to be as it were waked up out of it, and those that had been entangled with extraordinary temptations, seemed wonderfully to be set at liberty, and not only so, but it was the most remarkable time of health that ever I knew since I have been in the town. We ordinarily have several bills put up, every sabbath, for persons that are sick, but now we have not so much as one for many sabbaths together. But after this it seemed to be otherwise, when this work of God appeared to be at its greatest height. A poor weak man that belongs to the town, being in great spiritual trouble, was harried with violent temptations to cut his own throat, and made an attempt, but did not do it effectually. He after this continued a considerable time exceedingly overwhelmed with melancholy, but has now, of a long time, been very greatly delivered, by the light of God's countenance lifted up upon him, and has expressed a great sense of his sin in so far yielding to temptation, and there are in him all hopeful evidences of his having been made a subject of saving mercy

In the latter part of May, it began to be very sensible that the spirit of God was gradually withdrawing from us, and after this time Satan seemed to be more let loose, and raged in a dreadful manner. The first instance wherein it appeared, was a person's putting an end to his own life, by cutting his throat. He was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior, and an useful, honorable person in the town, but was of a family that are exceeding prone to the disease of melancholy, and his mother was killed with it. He had, from the beginning of this extraordinary time, been exceedingly concerned about the state of his soul, and there were some things in his experience, that appeared very hopefully, but he durst entertain no hope concerning his own good estate. Towards the latter part of his time, he grew much discouraged, and melancholy grew again upon him, till he was wholly overpowered, by it, and was in a great measure, past a capacity of receiving advice, or being reasoned with to any purpose. The devil took the advantage, and drove him into despairing thoughts. He was kept awake nights, meditating terror, so that he had scarce any sleep at all, for a long

time together. And it was observed at last, that he was scarcely well capable of managing his ordinary business, and was judged delirious by the coroner's inquest. The news of this, extraordinarily affected the minds of people here, and struck them as it were with astonishment. After this, multitudes in this and other towns seemed to have it strongly suggested to them, and pressed upon them, to do as this person had done. And many that seemed to be under no melancholy, some pious persons, that had no special darkness or doubts about the goodness of their state, nor were under any special trouble or concern of mind about any thing spiritual or temporal, yet had it urged upon them, as if somebody had spoken to them, *Cut your own throat, now is a good opportunity.* Now! Now! So that they were obliged to fight with all their might to resist it, and yet no reason suggested to them why they should do it.

About the same time, there were two remarkable instances of persons led away with strange enthusiastic delusions. One at Suffield, and another at South Hadley. That which has made the greatest noise in the country was of the man at South Hadley, whose delusion was, that he thought himself divinely instructed to direct a poor man in melancholy and despairing circumstances, to say certain words in prayer to God, as recorded in Psal cxvi 4, for his own relief. The man is esteemed a pious man. I have, since this error of his, had a particular acquaintance with him, and, I believe none would question his piety that had had such an acquaintance. He gave me a particular account of the manner how he was deluded, which is too long to be here inserted. But, in short, he was exceedingly rejoiced and elevated with this extraordinary work, so carried on in this part of the country, and was possessed with an opinion that it was the beginning of the glorious times of the church spoken of in scripture. And had read it as the opinion of some divines, that there would be many in these times that should be endued with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and had embraced the notion; though he had at first no apprehensions that any besides ministers would have such gifts. But he since exceedingly laments the dishonor he has done

to God, and the wound he has given religion in it, and has lain low before God and man for it.

1737

### From SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD

This discourse, delivered at Enfield, Connecticut, July 8, 1741, is probably the most famous of American minatory sermons. Contrary to common opinion, the "hell-fire" sermon is not characteristic of seventeenth-century Calvinistic preaching, which regarded one's future existence as a matter of foredetermined "election" and concerned itself chiefly with expounding and applying its own theological doctrine. With the Great Awakening and the rise of the Methodist and other evangelical sects, with their emphasis upon the act of conversion, the type of sermon which pleaded with sinners to "accept salvation" or terrified them with threats of hell if they continued in their course of indifference became increasingly common. The audience at Enfield were so moved by this address, delivered without sensationalism but with intense earnestness, that their sighs and groans of agony caused the preacher to pause and request silence in order that he might continue.

### Application

*Deuteronomy* xxxii, 35 — Their foot shall slide in due time

THE use of this awful subject may be for *awakening* to unconverted persons in this congregation. This that you have heard is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ. That world of misery, that lake of burning brimstone, is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of. There is nothing between you and hell but the air, 'tis only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.

You probably are not sensible of this, you find you are kept out of hell, but do not see the hand of God in it, but look at other things, as the good state of your bodily constitution, your care of your own life, and the means you use for your own preservation. But indeed these things are nothing, if God should withdraw his hand, they would avail no more to

keep you from falling than the thin air to hold up a person that is suspended in it.

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell, and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock. Were it not that so is the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment; for you are a burden to it, the creation groans with you, the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly, the sun does not willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan, the earth does not willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts, nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon, the air does not willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and do not willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder, and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind, otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present, they increase more and more and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given, and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course when once it is let loose. 'Tis true that judgment against your evil work has not been

executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld, but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath, the waters are continually rising and waxing more and more mighty, and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the floodgate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power, and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood

Thus are all you that never passed under a great change of heart by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls, all that were never born again and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin to a state of new and before altogether unexperienced light and life, (however you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets and in the house of God, and may be strict in it) you are thus in the hands of an angry God, 'tis nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being thus moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction.

However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you, see that it was so with them, for destruction came suddenly upon most of them, when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see that those things that they depended on for

peace and safety were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked, his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight, you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment 'Tis ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world after you closed your eyes to sleep, and there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in 'Tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.

And consider here more particularly several things concerning that wrath that you are in such danger of:

1. *Whose wrath it is.* It is the wrath of the infinite God. If it were only the wrath of man, though it were of the most potent prince, it would be comparatively little to be regarded

The wrath of kings is very much dreaded, especially of absolute monarchs, that have the possessions and lives of their subjects wholly in their power, to be disposed of at their mere will. *Prov.* xx 2, "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion whose provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul" The subject that very much enrages an arbitrary prince is liable to suffer the most extreme torments that human art can invent, or human power can inflict. But the greatest earthly potentates, in their greatest majesty and strength, and when clothed in their greatest terrors, are but feeble, despicable worms of the dust, in comparison of the great and almighty Creator and King of heaven and earth it is but little that they can do when most enraged, and when they have exerted the utmost of their fury All the kings of the earth before God are as grasshoppers, they are nothing, and less than nothing, both their love and their hatred is to be despised. The wrath of the great King of kings is as much more terrible than theirs, as his majesty is greater. *Luke* xii 4, 5, "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

2 'Tis the *fierceness* of his wrath that you are exposed to We often read of the *fury* of God, as in *Isaiah* lix 18. "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries." So *Isaiah* lxvi. 15, "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." And so in many other places. So we read of God's *fierceness*, *Rev.* xix. 15 There we read of "the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The words are exceeding terrible. if it had only been said, "the wrath of God," the words would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful but 'tis not only said so, but "the fierceness and wrath of God." The fury of God! The fierceness of Jehovah! Oh, how dreadful must that be! Who can utter or conceive what such expressions carry in them! But it is not only said so, but "the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" As

though there would be a very great manifestation of his almighty power in what the fierceness of his wrath should inflict, as though omnipotence should be as it were enraged, and exerted, as men are wont to exert their strength in the fierceness of their wrath Oh! then, what will be the consequence! What will become of the poor worm that shall suffer it! Whose hands can be strong! And whose heart endure! To what a dreadful, inexpressible, inconceivable depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk who shall be the subject of this!

Consider thus, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger implies that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom, he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand, there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind, he will have no regard to your welfare nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you should not suffer beyond what strict justice requires: nothing shall be withheld because it is so hard for you to bear. *Ezek.* viii 18, "Therefore will I also deal in fury mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Now God stands ready to pity you, this is a day of mercy, you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy, but when once the day of mercy is past, your most lamentable and dolorous cries and shrieks will be in vain, you will be wholly lost and thrown away of God, as to any regard to your welfare, God will have no other use to put you to, but only to suffer misery, you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel but only to be filled full of wrath: God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that 'tis said he will only "laugh and mock," *Prov.* i 25, 26, &c.

How awful are those words, *Isaiah* lxiii 3, which are the words of the great God "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." 'Tis perhaps impossible to conceive of words that carry in them greater manifestations of these three things, viz., contempt and hatred and fierceness of indignation. If you cry to God to pity you, he will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case or showing you the least regard or favor that instead of that he'll only tread you under foot; and though he will know that you can't bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet he won't regard that, but he will crush you under his feet without mercy, he'll crush out your blood and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on his garments, so as to stain all his raiment. He will not only hate you, but he will have you in the utmost contempt, no place shall be thought fit for you but under his feet, to be trodden down as the mire of the streets

3. The *misery* you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might show what that *wrath of Jehovah* is. God hath had it on his heart to show to angels and men, both how excellent his love is and also how terrible his wrath is. Sometimes earthly kings have a mind to show how terrible their wrath is, by the extreme punishments they would execute on those that provoke 'em. Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty and haughty monarch of the Chaldean empire, was willing to show his wrath when enraged with Sadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, and accordingly gave order that the burning fiery furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was before, doubtless it was raised to the utmost degree of fierceness that human art could raise it, but the great God is also willing to show his wrath and magnify his awful majesty and mighty power in the extreme sufferings of his enemies. *Rom* ix 22, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" And seeing this is his design, and what he has determined, to show how terrible the unmix'd, unrestrained wrath, the fury and

fierceness of Jehovah is, he will do it to effect. There will be something accomplished and brought to pass that will be dreadful with a witness. When the great and angry God hath risen up and executed his awful vengeance on the poor sinner, and the wretch is actually suffering the infinite weight and power of his indignation, then will God call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. *Isa.* xxxiii 12, 13, 14, "And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done, and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites," &c.

Thus it will be with you that are in an unconverted state, if you continue in it, the infinite might, and majesty, and terribleness, of the Omnipotent God shall be magnified upon you in the ineffable strength of your torments. You shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is, and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. *Isa* lxi 23, 24, "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

4. It is *everlasting wrath*. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment, but you must suffer it to all eternity. there will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all; you will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of

ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty, merciless vengeance, and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it, it is  
 10 inexpressible and inconceivable, for "who knows the power of God's anger?"

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh, that you would consider it, whether you be young or old! There is reason to think that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person,  
 20 and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing it would be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell! And it would be a wonder, if some that are now present should not be in  
 30 hell in a very short time, before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here in some seats of this meeting-house in health, and quiet and secure, should be there before tomorrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! Your damnation does not slumber; it will come swiftly and, in all probability, very suddenly upon many of you.  
 40 You have reason to wonder that you are not

already in hell! 'Tis doubtless the case of some that heretofore you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you. Their case is past all hope, they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair. But here you are in the land of the living and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those  
 50 poor, damned, hopeless souls give for one day's such opportunity as you now enjoy!

And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has flung the door of mercy wide open, and stands in the door calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners, a day wherein many are flocking to him and pressing into the Kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south, many that were very likely  
 20 in the same miserable condition that you are in, are in now a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him that has loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn for sorrow of heart and howl for vexation of spirit! How can you  
 30 rest for one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at Suffield, where they are flocking from day to day to Christ?

Are there not many here that have lived long in the world that are not to this day born again, and so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and have done nothing ever since they have lived but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case in an especial manner is extremely dangerous; your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Don't you see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider yourselves and wake thoroughly out of sleep, you cannot bear the fierceness and the wrath of the infinite God.

50 And you that are young men and young women, will you neglect this precious season

that you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities and flocking to Christ? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as it is with those persons that spent away all the precious days of youth in sin and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness.

And you children that are unconverted, 10 don't you know that you are going down to hell to bear the dreadful wrath of that God that is now angry with you every day and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted and are become the holy and happy children of the King of kings?

And let every one that is yet out of Christ and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they 20 be old men and women or middle-aged or young people or little children, now hearken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord that is a day of such great favor to some will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls. And never was there so great danger of such persons being given up 30 to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land, and probably the bigger part of adult persons that ever shall be saved will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on that great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews in the Apostles' days, the election will obtain and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this 40 day, and will curse the day that ever you was born to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit, and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the axe is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit may be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Therefore let every one that is out of Christ 50 now awake and fly from the wrath to come.

The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation. Let every one fly out of Sodom. *"Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed."*

1741

#### LETTER TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

This letter is significant in Edwards's self-appraisal of his personality, his literary projects for the future, and his misgivings regarding the responsibilities and the restricted liberties of a college president.

Stockbridge, Oct. 19, 1757.

Rev and Hon Gentlemen,

I was not a little surprised, on receiving the unexpected notice of your having made choice of me to succeed the late President Burr as the head of Nassau Hall<sup>1</sup>—I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the business which you have done me the unmerited honor to choose me for.—If some regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniences and great detriment which may be sustained by my removing, with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world 30 (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, but with great loss) now when we have scarcely got over the trouble and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton and have but just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation for a subsistence in this place, and the expense I must immediately be at, to put myself into circumstances tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honors of the office 40 I am invited to, which will not well consist with my ability.

But this is not my main objection. The chief difficulties in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two: First, my own defects, unfitting for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known, beside others, of which my own heart is conscious—I have a constitution, in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with

<sup>1</sup> early name for the College of New Jersey, now Princeton



flaccid solids, vapid, sly<sup>1</sup> and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanor, with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college.—This makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking up to me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness, and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference.<sup>2</sup> I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in Algebra, and the higher parts of Mathematics, and in the Greek Classics, my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament.—The other thing is this that my engaging in this business will not well consist with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.

And here, honored Sirs, (emboldened by the testimony I have now received of your unmerited esteem to rely on your candor) I will with freedom open myself to you

My method of study from my first beginning the work of the ministry has been very much by writing, applying myself in this way to improve every important hint, pursuing the clue to my utmost when anything in reading, meditation, or conversation has been suggested to my mind that seemed to promise light in any weighty point, thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects, for my own benefit.—The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it.—The farther I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned my laying out many things in my mind to do in this manner, if God should spare my life,<sup>3</sup> which my heart

hath been much upon, particularly many things against most of the prevailing errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience see maintained (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ,) with so high a hand, and so long continued a triumph with so little control, when it appears so evident to me that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying and insult I have already published something on one of the main points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists; and have it in view, God willing, (as I have already signified to the public) in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it.—But beside these, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history, considering the affair of Christian Theology as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, which I suppose to be, of all others, the grand design of God and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and decrees, particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order.—The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events, beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God and revolutions in the world of mankind affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have an account of in the history or prophecy, till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End."—Concluding my work with the consideration of that perfect state of things which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity.—Thus history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell, considering the connected successive events and

<sup>1</sup> viscous, glutinous    <sup>2</sup> the Rev Aaron Burr, husband of Edwards's daughter, Esther, and father of Vice-President Aaron Burr    <sup>3</sup> Edwards died in the following March, two months after his inauguration

alterations in each, so far as the scriptures give any light, introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural, a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to the greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, shewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole

I have also, for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call the *Harmony of the Old and New Testament*, in three parts. The first, considering the Prophecies of the Messiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Messiah, etc., comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement, true scope, and sense, also considering all the various particulars wherein those prophecies have their exact fulfilment; showing the universal, precise, and admirable correspondence between predictions and events. The second part, considering the Types of the Old Testament, shewing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things of the gospel of Christ, and the agreement of the type with the antitype. The third and great part, considering the Harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and precept. In the course of this work, I find there will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the holy Scriptures, which may, in such a view, be explained in a method which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life and soul of the Scriptures, as well as their proper use and improvement—I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of. Some of these things, if divine Providence favor, I should be willing to attempt a publication of. So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have for benefiting my fellow creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak

My heart is so much in these studies that I cannot find in my heart to be willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any

more in the future part of my life, to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go through the same course of employ in the office of president that Mr Burr did, instructing in all the languages and taking the whole care of the instruction of one of the classes in all parts of learning, besides his other labors. If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work of a president, so far as it consists in the general inspection of the whole society; and to be subservient to the school, as to their order and methods of study and instruction, assisting, myself, in the immediate instruction in the arts and sciences (as discretion should direct, and occasion serve, and the state of things require), especially of the senior class, and added to all should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in public and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper seasons for these ends. It would be now out of my way to spend time, in a constant teaching of the languages, unless it be the Hebrew tongue, which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others

On the whole, I am much at loss with respect to the way of duty in this important affair. I doubt whether, if I should engage in it, I should not do what both you and I would be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body as that of the trustees of Nassau Hall requires my taking the matter into serious consideration. And unless you should appear to be discouraged by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, I shall proceed to ask advice of such as I esteem most wise, friendly, and faithful, if, after the mind of the Commissioners in Boston<sup>1</sup> is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty with respect to the business they have employed me in here.

1757

<sup>1</sup> in charge of the Indian mission at Stockbridge

## 1705 ~ Charles Chauncy ~ 1787

THE REVEREND CHARLES CHAUNCY, one of whose Chauncy ancestors had been president of Harvard and another of Yale, was pastor of the First Church—the Mathers' church—in Boston for fifty years. He was a man of great intellectual and moral strength and genuineness, with "an ineffable contempt for all slipshod, giddy, gaseous minds," as M. C. Tyler said of him. He distrusted the evangelistic preaching of Whitefield, took pains to learn at first hand its methods and effects, and became convinced that they tended to religious anarchy and delusion. As a result, he assailed the Great Awakening in a powerful sermon, *Enthusiasm Described and Cautioned Against* (1742), and in *Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743). In the former he boldly advised his hearers to "make use of the Reason and Understanding God has given you. This may be thought an ill-advised direction, but . . . next to the Scripture, there is no greater enemy to enthusiasm than reason. 'Tis indeed impossible a man should be an enthusiast who is in the just exercise of his understanding; and 'tis because men don't pay a due regard to the sober dictates of a well-informed mind that they are led aside by the delusions of a vain imagination." With his contemporary, Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766), pastor of the West Church, he was active in political thought and discussion leading up to the Revolution, and in religion was a forerunner of the later Unitarian movement.

Chauncy's life and work is discussed in W. C. Fowler, *Memorials of the Chauncys* (1858), 49-70, William Emerson, *Historical Sketch of the First Church in Boston*, 181-214, W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (1865), II, 8-13, and Williston Walker, *Ten New England Leaders* (1901), 267-310. *Bibliographia Chaunciana A List of the Writings of Charles Chauncy*, by P. L. Ford, was published as No. 6 of the Elzevir Club Series (1884).

From ENTHUSIASM DESCRIBED  
AND CAUTIONED AGAINST

. . . [THE] Enthusiast is one who has a conceit of himself as a person favored with the extraordinary presence of the Deity. He mistakes the workings of his own passions for divine communications, and fancies himself immediately inspired by the Spirit of God, when all the while, he is under no other influence than that of an over-heated imagination.

The cause of this enthusiasm is a bad tem-

perament of the blood and spirits, 'tis properly a disease, a sort of madness, and there are few, perhaps none at all, but are subject to it, though none are so much in danger of it as those in whom melancholy is the prevailing ingredient in their constitution. In these it often reigns, and sometimes to so great a degree that they are really beside themselves, acting as truly by the blind impetus of a wild fancy, as though they had neither reason nor understanding.

And various are the ways in which their enthusiasm discovers itself.

Sometimes, it may be seen in their countenance. A certain wildness is discernable in their general look and air, especially when their imaginations are moved and fired.

Sometimes, it strangely loosens their tongues and gives them such an energy, as well as fluency and volubility in speaking, as they themselves, by their utmost efforts, can't so much as imitate, when they are not under the enthusiastic influence.

Sometimes, it affects their bodies, throws them into convulsions and distortions, into quakings and tremblings. This was formerly common among the people called Quakers. I was myself, when a lad, an eye-witness to such violent agitations and foamings in a boisterous female speaker as I could not behold but with surprise and wonder.

Sometimes, it will unaccountably mix itself with their conduct and give it such a tincture of that which is freakish or furious as none can have an idea of, but those who have seen the behavior of a person in a frenzy.

Sometimes, it appears in their imaginary peculiar intimacy with heaven. They are, in their own opinion, the special favorites of God, have more familiar converse with Him than other good men, and receive immediate, extraordinary communications from Him. The thoughts which suddenly rise up in their minds, they take for suggestions of the Spirit, their very fancies are divine illuminations, nor are they strongly inclined to anything, but 'tis an impulse from God, a plain revelation of His will.

And what extravagances, in this temper of mind, are they not capable of, and under the specious pretext, too, of paying obedience to the authority of God? Many have fancied themselves acting by immediate warrant from heaven, while they have been committing the most undoubted wickedness. There is indeed scarce anything so wild, either in speculation or practice, but they have given in to it. They have, in many instances, been blasphemers of God and open disturbers of the peace of the world.

But in nothing does the enthusiasm of these persons discover itself more than in the disregard they express to the dictates of reason. They are above the force of argument, be-

yond conviction from a calm and sober address to their understandings. As for them, they are distinguished persons; God himself speaks inwardly and immediately to their souls. "They see the light infused into their understandings, and cannot be mistaken, 'tis clear and visible there, like the light of bright sunshine, shows itself and needs no other proof but its own evidence. They feel the hand of God moving them within and the impulses of His Spirit, and cannot be mistaken in what they feel. Thus they support themselves, and are sure reason hath nothing to do with what they see and feel. What they have a sensible experience of, admits no doubt, needs no probation." And in vain will you endeavor to convince such persons of any mistakes they are fallen into. They are certainly in the right, and know themselves to be so. They have the Spirit opening their understandings and revealing the truth to them. They believe only as he has taught them and to suspect they are in the wrong is to do dishonor to the Spirit, 'tis to oppose his dictates, to set up their own wisdom in opposition to his, and shut their eyes against that light with which he has shined into their souls. They are not, therefore, capable of being argued with, you had as good reason with the wind.

And as the natural consequence of their being thus sure of everything, they are not only infinitely stiff and tenacious, but impatient of contradiction, censorious, and uncharitable, they encourage a good opinion of none but such as are in their way of thinking and speaking. Those, to be sure, who venture to debate with them about their errors and mistakes, their weaknesses and indiscretions, run the hazard of being stigmatized by them as poor unconverted wretches, without the Spirit, under the government of carnal reason, enemies to God and religion, and in the broad way to hell.

They are likewise positive and dogmatical, vainly fond of their own imaginations, and invincibly set upon propagating them, and in the doing of this, their powers being awakened and put as it were, upon the stretch, from the strong impressions they are under that they are authorized by the immediate command of God himself, they sometimes exert themselves

with a sort of ecstatic violence; and 'tis this that gives them the advantage, among the less knowing and judicious, of those who are modest, suspicious of themselves, and not too assuming in matters of conscience and salvation. The extraordinary fervor of their minds, accompanied with uncommon bodily motions and an excessive confidence and assurance, gains them great reputation among the populace, who speak of them as men of God in distinction from all others, and too commonly hearken to and revere their dictates, as though they really were, as they pretend, immediately communicated to them from the Divine Spirit

This is the nature of Enthusiasm, and thus its operation, in a less or greater degree, in all who are under the influence of it 'Tis a kind of religious frenzy, and evidently discovers itself to be so whenever it rises to any great height.

And much to be pitied are the persons who are seized with it. Our compassion commonly works towards those who, while under distraction, fondly imagine themselves to be

kings and emperors, and the like pity is really due to those who, under the power of enthusiasm, fancy themselves to be prophets, inspired of God and immediately called and commissioned by him to deliver his messages to the world. And though they should run into disorders and act in a manner that cannot but be condemned, they should notwithstanding be treated with tenderness and lenity, and the rather, because they do not commonly act so much under the influence of a bad mind as a deluded imagination. And who more worthy of Christian pity than those who, under the notion of serving God and the interest of religion, are filled with zeal and exert themselves to the utmost while all the time they are hurting and wounding the very cause they take so much pains to advance. 'Tis really a pitiable case, and though the honesty of their intentions won't legitimate their bad actions, yet it very much alleviates their guilt. We should think as favorably of them as may be and be disposed to judge with mercy, as we would hope to obtain mercy

1742

## *Provincial Poetry*

THE ANONYMOUS "Lovewell's Fight" is one of our oldest native ballads. It is perhaps a version of "The Volunter's March, being a full and true Account of the bloody Fight which happen'd between Captain Lovewell's Company and the Indians at Pigwacket," a broadside printed by Franklin's brother, James, at Boston in May, 1725. It celebrates a bloody and unheroic scalping raid from Dunstable, Mass., against the Sokokis Indians encamped at Pequawket (now Fryeburg), Maine, from which only twenty of the forty-six English returned alive.

Richard Lewis, born about 1700, had studied at Eton and perhaps at Oxford before coming to America about 1725. For a decade he was a tutor or schoolmaster at Annapolis, Maryland, patronized by Governor Calvert and fraternizing with a small group of literary persons in the provincial capital. In 1734 or soon after, he seems to have died or left the province. While in Maryland he produced several undistinguished poems and one of greater merit. Anne Bradstreet and Benjamin Tompson had introduced native birds, trees, and flowers into their poems, but

Lewis's "Description of Spring" (1730), based upon a ride through the country, is the first American landscape piece, of a fashion cultivated by Milton, Pope, Dyer, and Thomson in England, and at least equally genuine in its treatment of native details. The poem was printed with praise in the *London Weekly Register* in January, 1932, and reprinted in the *London* and *Gentleman's* magazines.

Mather Byles (1707-1788), pastor of the Hollis Street Church, and Joseph Green (1706-1780), merchant and distiller, were fellow students at Harvard and fellow Tories in Boston. Byles, a grandson of Increase Mather and educated partly by his uncle Cotton, published several sermons and two volumes of rather formal poetry, and was delighted when Pope and the hymn-writer Watts acknowledged verses he sent to them. He was dispossessed by his church in 1776 and later sentenced to banishment, but was allowed to remain at home under guard. An inveterate wit and punster, he called the sentry set to watch his house his "Observe-a-Tory"; and once when the soldier had to leave his post, gravely assumed his musket and guarded himself until the sentry's return. Green, like Byles, was connected by blood and marriage with prominent Tory families. His appointment as counsellor of the province in 1774 made him so unpopular that his house was defaced and he left the colonies for England the next year. His printed verses were nearly all humorous satires, like those written about Byles when, shanghaied over the Sabbath by Governor Belcher without his prayer book, he avenged himself by composing a hymn for the occasion and holding services on shipboard.

Perhaps the best couplet verse in the provincial period was that of Benjamin Church (1734-1776), a member of Dr. Byles's church and a prominent physician and publicist. He seems to have resembled Defoe in writing able articles for the Patriots and answering them in the Tory newspapers. He was court-martialed and convicted under General Washington for betraying a secret code to the enemy, was imprisoned for a while, and then allowed to sail for the West Indies on a ship which was never heard from after leaving port. He had resided in England, and his verse shows familiarity with the best English poets of his time.

Thomas Godfrey (1736-1763) and Nathaniel Evans (1742-1767) were two young Philadelphia writers of light and graceful lyrics. Godfrey, whose father of the same name was a scientist and inventor of the quadrant used in surveying, was a protégé of Dr. William Smith, later provost of the College of Philadelphia. He served in the expedition which took Fort Duquesne and later became a tobacco factor at Washington, North Carolina, where he died. He wrote Cavalier pastorals and love songs and the longer *Court of Fancy*, published in 1762. He is remembered, however, as the author of the first professionally performed tragedy by an American. This was the blank verse *The Prince of Parthia*, written in 1759 but not enacted, by the American Company at Philadelphia, until after his death in 1767. Though filled with situations and echoes from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet*,

and *Richard III*, it shows some vigor and skill in plot structure. Evans survived to edit a little volume of his friend's works. He also was aided by Provost Smith, who secured for him an honorary M.A. from the College in 1765. He traveled in England, was ordained there, and served for two years as missionary in Gloucester County, New Jersey, before his early death. His *Poems on Several Occasions*, verses imitative of Milton's earlier poems and those of his contemporaries Cowley, Gray, and Collins, but manifesting some skill and youthful liveliness, appeared five years after his death, with an introduction by Dr. Smith.

Phyllis Wheatley was a verse prodigy of her time, long cited by the Abolitionists to refute the alleged intellectual limitations of Negroes. Brought from Africa as a child, she was educated with the children of her owner, a Boston merchant named Wheatley, and developed a facility at writing rather lifeless but correct heroic couplets, of which those in honor of the preacher Whitefield were widely printed throughout the provinces.

For the incident dealt with in "Lovewell's Fight," see Fannie H. Eckstorm, "Pigwacket and Parson Symmes," *New England Quarterly*, IX, 378-402.

A. H. W. Eaton's *The Famous Mather Byles* (1914) includes a biography and bibliography. See also Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, I, 376-382 (1857), and Duyckinck's *Cyclopedia of American Literature*. A good summary is K. B. Murdock's article on Byles in the *DAB*.

Several poems by Joseph Green are reprinted in Duyckinck's *Cyclopedia of American Literature*. See also the *DAB* article by K. B. Murdock, J. H. Stark, *Loyalists of Massachusetts* (1910), 137-140; and M. C. Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period*, II, 48-51.

Several poems by Richard Lewis, preserved in a manuscript volume in the library of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, were printed by Professor W. B. Norris in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXXII, 112-135 (June, 1937). What is known regarding Lewis's life and work is summarized by C. L. Carlson in "Richard Lewis and the Reception of His Work in England," *American Literature*, IX, 301-316 (Nov., 1937).

Benjamin Church's *The Chouc*, with a brief sketch of the author and his work, may be found in Duyckinck's *Cyclopedia of American Literature*. See also the *DAB* article by A. C. Mallock, and Allen French's *General Gage's Informers* (1932), 147-201.

Thomas Godfrey's *Juvenile Poems* appeared in 1765, with an introduction by Nathaniel Evans. His tragedy, *The Prince of Parthia*, has been edited, with introductions, by Archibald Henderson (1917), and in the collections of American plays by A. H. Quinn (1917), M. J. Moses (1918-21), and A. G. Halline (1935). The *DAB* article is by Professor Quinn. See also Quinn's *History of the American Drama to the Civil War* (1923), 16-27, and M. C. Tyler's *History of American Literature during the Colonial Period*, II, 244-251.

There is a brief biography of Nathaniel Evans by E. L. Pennington (1935). The article in *DAB* is by H. E. Starr. See also M. K. Jackson, *Outlines of the Literary History of Colonial Pennsylvania* (1906), E. P. Oberholtzer, *Literary History of Philadelphia* (1906); and H. W. Smith, *Life and Correspondence of Rev. William Smith*, Vol. I (1880).

*Phyllis Wheatley Poems and Letters*, edited by C. F. Heartman, with an appreciation by Arthur Schomburg, was published in 1915. Heartman also published in the same year a *Critical*

*Bibliography of her writings. A Memoir and Poems, edited by Margaretta M. Odell, appeared in 1834. See also R. W. Griswold, Female Poets of America (1849), and B. G. Brawley, Early American Negro Writers (1935).*

## LOVEWELL'S FIGHT

OF worthy Captain Lovewell I purpose now  
to sing,  
How valiantly he served his country and  
his King,  
He and his valiant soldiers, did range the  
woods full wide,  
And hardships they endured to quell the  
Indians' pride.

'Twas nigh unto Pigwacket, on the eighth  
day of May,  
They spied a rebel Indian soon after break  
of day,  
He on a bank was walking, upon a neck of  
land,  
Which leads into a pond as we're made to  
understand

Our men resolved to have him and travell'd  
two miles round,  
Until they met the Indian, who boldly stood  
his ground,  
Then spake up Captain Lovewell, "Take you  
good heed," said he,  
"This rogue is to decoy us, I very plainly  
see

"The Indians lie in ambush, in some place  
nigh at hand,  
In order to surround us upon this neck of  
land,  
Therefore we'll march in order, and each  
man leave his pack,  
That we may briskly fight them when they  
make their attack."

They came unto this Indian, who did them  
thus defy,  
As soon as they came nigh him, two guns  
he did let fly,  
Which wounded Captain Lovewell, and like-  
wise one man more,  
But when this rogue was running, they laid  
him in his gore

Then having scalp'd the Indian, they went  
back to the spot,  
Where they had laid their packs down, but  
there they found them not,  
For the Indians having spy'd them, when  
they them down did lay,  
Did seize them for their plunder, and carry  
them away

These rebels lay in ambush, this very place  
hard by,  
So that an English soldier did one of them  
espied,  
And cried out, "Here's an Indian," with  
that they started out,  
As fiercely as old lions, and hideously did  
shout.

With that our valiant English, all gave a  
loud huzza,  
To show the rebel Indians they fear'd them  
not a straw  
So now the fight began, and as fiercely as  
could be,  
The Indians ran up to them, but soon were  
forc'd to flee

Then spake up Captain Lovewell, when first  
the fight began,  
"Fight on, my valiant heroes! you see they  
fall like rain"  
For as we are inform'd, the Indians were so  
thick,  
A man could scarcely fire a gun and not some  
of them hit.

Then did the rebels try their best our soldiers  
to surround,  
But they could not accomplish it, because  
there was a pond,  
To which our men retreated and covered all  
the rear,  
The rogues were forc'd to flee them, altho'  
they skulk'd for fear.



Two logs there were behind them, that close  
together lay,  
Without being discovered, they could not  
get away,  
Therefore our valiant English, they travell'd  
in a row,  
And at a handsome distance as they were  
wont to go

'Twas ten o'clock in the morning, when first  
the fight begun,  
And fiercely did continue until the setting  
sun;  
Excepting that the Indians, some hours  
before 'twas night,  
Drew off into the bushes and ceased awhile  
to fight

But soon again returned, in fierce and furious  
mood,  
Shouting as in the morning, but yet not half  
so loud, 50  
For as we are informed, so thick and fast  
they fell,  
Scarce twenty of their number, at night did  
get home well.

And that our valiant English, till midnight  
there did stay,  
To see whether the rebels would have an-  
other fray,  
But they no more returning, they made off  
towards their home,  
And brought away their wounded as far as  
they could come

Of all our valiant English, there were but  
thirty-four,  
And of the rebel Indians, there were about  
four score  
And sixteen of our English did safely home  
return,  
The rest were killed and wounded, for which  
we all must mourn 60

Our worthy Captain Lovewell among them  
there did die,  
They killed Lieutenant Robins, and wounded  
good young Frye,  
Who was our English chaplain, he many  
Indians slew,  
And some of them he scalp'd when bullets  
round him flew.

Young Fullam too I'll mention, because he  
fought so well,  
Endeavoring to save a man, a sacrifice he  
fell,  
But yet our valiant Englishmen in fight were  
ne'er dismay'd,  
But still they kept their motion, and Wy-  
man's Captain made,

Who shot the old chief Paugus, which did the  
foe defeat,  
Then set his men in order, and brought off  
the retreat, 70  
And braving many dangers and hardships in  
the way,  
They safe arriv'd at Dunstable, the thirteenth  
day of May

c. 1724

### DESCRIPTION OF SPRING

A JOURNEY FROM PATAPSCO IN MARYLAND  
TO ANNAPOLIS

By Richard Lewis

In this soft season, ere the dawn of day,  
I mount my horse and lonely take my way,  
From woody hills that shade Patapasco's head  
(In whose deep vales he makes his stony bed,  
From whence he rushes with resistless force,  
Tho' huge rough rocks retard his rapid course)  
Down to Annapolis, on that smooth stream  
Which took from fair Anne Arundel its name

And now the star that ushers in the day  
"Begins to pale her ineffectual ray" 10  
The moon, with blunted horns, now shines  
less bright,

Her fading face eclips'd with growing light,  
The fleecy clouds with streaky lustre glow,  
And day quits heav'n to view the earth below  
O'er yon tall pines the sun shows half his face,  
And fires their floating foliage with his rays;  
Now sheds aslant on earth his lightsome  
beams,

That trembling shine in many-color'd streams  
Slow-rising from the marsh, the mist recedes,  
The trees, emerging, rear their dewy heads, 20  
Their dewy heads the sun with pleasure views,  
And brightens into pearls the pendent dews.

The beasts, uprising, quit their leafy beds,  
And to the cheerful sun erect their heads,

All joyful rise, except the filthy swine,  
 On obscene litter stretch'd, they snore supine  
 In vain the day awakes; sleep seals their eyes,  
 Till hunger breaks the band and bids them rise  
 Meanwhile the sun with more exalted ray,  
 From cloudless skies distributes riper day, 30  
 Through sylvan scenes my journey I pursue,  
 Ten thousand beauties rising to my view;  
 Which kindle in my breast poetic flame,  
 And bid me my Creator's praise proclaim,  
 Though my low verse ill-suits the noble  
 theme.

Here various flowerets grace the teeming  
 plains,  
 Adorn'd by nature's hand with beauteous  
 stains

First born of spring, here the paeon<sup>1</sup> appears,  
 Whose golden root a silver blossom rears.  
 In spreading tufts, see there the crowfoot  
 blue, 40

On whose green leaves still shines a globous  
 dew,

Behold, the cinque-foil, with its dazzling dye  
 Of flaming yellow, wounds the tender eye  
 But there enclos'd the grassy wheat is seen,  
 To heal the aching sight with cheerful green  
 Safe in yon cottage dwells the monarch  
 swain;

His subject flocks, close-grazing, hide the plain,  
 For him they live and die t' uphold his reign  
 Viands unbought his well-till'd lands afford,  
 And smiling Plenty waits upon his board; 50  
 Health shines with sprightly beams around his  
 head,

And sleep, with downy wings, o'er shades his  
 bed

His sons robust his daily labors share,  
 Patient of toil, companions of his care,  
 And all their toils with sweet success are  
 crown'd

In graceful banks there trees adorn the ground,  
 The peach, the plum, the apple, here are found  
 Delicious fruits!—which from their kernels  
 rise,

So fruitful is the soil—so mild the skies,  
 The lowly quince yon sloping hill o'er-shades,  
 Here lofty cherry trees erect their heads; 61  
 High in the air each spiry summit waves,  
 Whose blooms thick-springing yield no space  
 for leaves;

<sup>1</sup> puccoon bloodroot

Evolving odors fill the ambient air;  
 The birds delighted to the groves repair;  
 On ev'ry tree behold a tuneful throng,  
 The vocal valleys echo to their song.

But what is he, who perch'd above the rest,  
 Pours out such various music from his breast!<sup>1</sup>  
 His breast, whose plumes a cheerful white  
 display. 70

His quiv'ring wings are dress'd in sober gray.  
 Sure all the Muses this their bird inspire!  
 And he, alone, is equal to the choir  
 Of warbling songsters who around him play,  
 While, echo-like, he answers ev'ry lay.  
 The chirping lark now sings with sprightly  
 note,

Responsive to her strain he shapes his throat.  
 Now the poor widow'd turtle<sup>2</sup> wails her mate,  
 While in soft sounds he coos to mourn his  
 fate

Oh sweet musician, thou dost far excel 80  
 The soothing song of pleasing Philomel!  
 Sweet is her song, but in few notes confin'd,  
 But thine, thou mimic of the feath'ry kind,  
 Runs through all notes!—Thou only know'st  
 them all,

At once the copy—and th' original.

My ear thus charm'd, my eye with pleasure  
 sees

Hov'ring about the flow'rs th' industrious bees  
 Like them in size, the humming-bird I view,  
 Like them, he sucks his food, the honey dew,  
 With nimbly tongue, and beak of jetty hue 90  
 He takes with rapid whirl his noisy flight,  
 His gemmy plumage strikes the gazer's sight,  
 And as he moves his ever-flutt'ring wings,  
 Ten thousand colors he around him flings.  
 Now I behold the em'rald's vivid green,  
 Now scarlet, now a purple dye is seen,  
 In brightest blue, his breast he now arrays,  
 Then straight his plumes emit a golden blaze  
 Thus whirling round he flies, and varying  
 still

He mocks the poet's and the painter's skill 100  
 Who may forever strive with fruitless pains,  
 To catch and fix those beauteous changeful  
 stains,

While scarlet now, and now the purple shines,  
 And gold to blue its transient gloss resigns.  
 Each quits, and quickly each resumes its place,  
 And ever-varying dyes each other chase.

<sup>1</sup> the mockingbird

<sup>2</sup> turtledove

Smallest of birds, what beauties shine in thee!  
A living rainbow on thy breast I see.

Oh had that bard, in whose heart-pleasing  
lines,

The phoenix in a blaze of glory shines, 110  
Beheld those wonders which are shown in  
thee,

That bird had lost his immortality!  
Thou in his verse hadst stretch'd thy flutt'ring  
wing

Above all other birds,—their beauteous king.

But now th' enclos'd plantation I forsake,  
And onwards thro' the woods my journey  
take,

The level road the longsome way beguiles;  
A blooming wilderness around me smiles;  
Here hardy oak, there fragrant huck'ry grows,  
Their bursting buds the tender leaves disclose,  
The tender leaves in downy robes appear,  
Trembling, they seem to move with cautious  
fear, 122

Yet new to life, and strangers to the air.  
Here stately pines unite their whisp'ring heads,  
And with a solemn gloom embrown the  
glades

See, there a green savanna opens wide,  
Through which smooth streams in wanton  
mazes glide,

Thick-branching shrubs o'erhang the silver  
streams,

Which scarcely deign t' admit the solar  
beams. . .

1730

1732

## HYMN TO BE SUNG AT SEA

By Mather Byles

GREAT God, thy works our wonders raise,  
To thee our swelling notes belong,  
While skies and winds, and rocks and seas,  
Around shall echo to our song

Thy power produced this mighty frame,  
Aloud to thee the tempests roar,  
Or softer breezes tune thy name  
Gently along the shelly shore

Round thee the scaly nation roves,  
Thy opening hands their joys bestow, 10  
Through all the blushing coral groves,  
These silent gay retreats below

See the broad sun forsake the skies,  
Glow on the waves, and downward glide;  
Anon heaven opens all its eyes,  
And star-beams tremble o'er the tide.

Each various scene, or day or night,  
Lord! points to thee our nourish'd soul;  
Thy glories fix our whole delight;  
So the touch'd needle courts the pole. 20

## PARODY OF BYLES'S HYMN

By Joseph Green

IN David's Psalms an oversight  
Byles found one morning at his tea,  
Alas! that he should never write  
A proper psalm to sing at sea.

Thus ruminating on his seat,  
Ambitious thoughts at length prevail'd,  
The bard determined to complete  
The part wherein the prophet fail'd

He sat a while and stroked his muse,<sup>1</sup>  
Then taking up his tuneful pen, 10  
Wrote a few stanzas for the use  
Of his seafaring brethren

The task perform'd, the bard content,  
Well chosen was each flowing word;  
On a short voyage himself he went,  
To hear it read and sung on board.

Most serious Christians do aver,  
(Their credit sure we may rely on,)  
In former times that after prayer,  
They used to sing a song of Zion. 20

Our modern parson having pray'd,  
Unless loud fame our faith beguiles,  
Sat down, took out his book and said,  
"Let's sing a psalm of Mather Byles "

At first, when he began to read,  
Their heads the assembly downwards  
hung,  
But he with boldness did proceed,  
And thus he read, and thus they sung:

<sup>1</sup> See "The Poet's Lamentation for the Loss of his Cat," below

THE PSALM

With vast amazement we survey  
 The wonders of the deep, 30  
 Where mackerel swim, and porpoise play,  
 And crabs and lobsters creep.

Fish of all kinds inhabit here,  
 And throng the dark abode  
 Here haddock, hake, and flounders are,  
 And eels, and perch, and cod

From raging winds and tempests free,  
 So smoothly as we pass,  
 The shining surface seems to be  
 A piece of Bristol glass 40

But when the winds and tempests rise,  
 And foaming billows swell,  
 The vessel mounts above the skies,  
 And lower sinks than hell.

Our heads the tottering motion feel,  
 And quickly we become  
 Giddy as new-dropp'd calves, and reel  
 Like Indians drunk with rum

What praises then are due that we  
 Thus far have safely got, 50  
 Amarecoggin tribe to see,  
 And tribe of Penobscot

1733

PARODY OF GREEN'S PARODY

By Mather Byles

IN Byles's works an oversight  
 Green spy'd, as once he smok'd his chunk,  
 Alas! that Byles should never write  
 A song to sing, when folks are drunk.

Thus in the chimney on his block,  
 Ambition fir'd the 'stiller's pate,  
 He summon'd all his little stock,  
 The poet's volume to complete

Long paus'd the lout and scratch'd his skull,  
 Then took his chalk (he own'd no pen,) 10  
 And scrawl'd some dogg'el, for the whole  
 Of his flip-drinking brethren.

The task perform'd—not to content—  
 Ill chosen was each Grub-street word;

Straight to the tavern club he went,  
 To hear it bellow'd round the board.

Unknown delights his ears explore,  
 Inur'd to midnight caterwauls,  
 To hear his hoarse companions roar,  
 The horrid thing his dulness scrawls. 20

The club, if fame we may rely on,  
 Conven'd, to hear the drunken catch,  
 At the Three Horse-shoes, or Red Lion—  
 Tippling began the night's debauch.

The little 'stiller took the pint  
 Full fraught with flip and songs obscene,  
 And, after a long stutt'ring, meant  
 To sing a song of Josy Green.

Soon as with stam'ring tongue, to read  
 The drunken ballad, he began, 30  
 The club from clam'ring straight recede,  
 To hear him roar the thing alone.

THE SONG

With vast amazement we survey  
 The can, so broad, so deep,  
 Where punch succeeds to strong sangree,  
 Both to delightful flip

Drink of all smacks, inhabit here,  
 And throng the dark abode,  
 Here's rum, and sugar, and small beer,  
 In a continual flood 40

From cruel thoughts and conscience free,  
 From dram to dram we pass,  
 Our cheeks, like apples, ruddy be,  
 Our eyeballs look like glass

At once, like furies up we rise,  
 Our raging passions swell,  
 We hurl the bottle to the skies,  
 But why, we cannot tell

Our brains a tott'ring motion feel,  
 And quickly we become 50  
 Sick, as with negro steaks, and reel  
 Like Indians drunk with rum.

Thus lost in deep tranquillity,  
 We sit, supine and sot,  
 Till we two moons distinctly see—  
 Come give us t'other pot.

1733

## THE POET'S LAMENTATION

FOR THE LOSS OF HIS CAT, WHICH HE  
USED TO CALL HIS MUSE

By Joseph Green

*Felis quaedam delictum erat cuiusdam adolescentis —Ætop*

OPPRESS'D with grief in heavy strains I mourn  
The partner of my studies from me torn  
How shall I sing? what numbers shall I chuse?  
For in my fav'rite cat I've lost my muse  
No more I feel my mind with raptures fir'd,  
I want those airs that Puss so oft inspir'd,  
No crowding thoughts my ready fancy fill,  
Nor words run fluent from my easy quill,  
Yet shall my verse deplore her cruel fate,  
And celebrate the virtues of my cat. 10

In acts obscene she never took delight,  
No caterwauls disturb'd our sleep by night,  
Chaste as a virgin, free from every stain,  
And neigh'ring cats mew'd for her love  
in vain

She never thirsted for the chickens' blood,  
Her teeth she only used to chew her food,  
Harmless as satires which her master writes,  
A foe to scratching, and unused to bites,  
She in the study was my constant mate,  
There we together many evenings sat 20  
Whene'er I felt my tow'ring fancy fail,  
I stroked her head, her ears, her back, and tail,  
And as I stroked improv'd my dying song  
From the sweet notes of her melodious  
tongue

Her purrs and mews so evenly kept time,  
She purr'd in metre, and she mew'd in  
rhyme

But when my dulness has too stubborn  
prov'd,

Nor could by Puss's music be remov'd,  
Oft to the well-known volumes have I gone,  
And stole a line from Pope or Addison 30

Ofttimes when lost amidst poetic heat,  
She leaping on my knee has took her seat;  
There saw the throes that rock'd my lab'ring  
brain,

And lick'd and claw'd me to myself again,

Then, friends, indulge my grief, and let me  
mourn,

My cat is gone, ah! never to return.

Now in my study, all the tedious night,

Alone I sit and unassisted write;  
Look often round (O greatest cause of  
pain),

And view the num'rous labors of my brain; 40  
Those quires of words array'd in pompous  
rhyme,

Which braved the jaws of all-devouring  
time,

Now undefended and unwatch'd by cats,  
Are doom'd a victim to the teeth of rats.

1733

## From THE CHOICE

By Benjamin Church

If youthful fancy might its choice pursue,  
And act as natural reason prompts it to,  
If inclination could dispose our state,  
And human will might govern future fate,  
Remote from grandeur, I'd be humbly wise,  
And all the glitter of a court despise  
Unskilled the proud or vicious to commend,  
To cringe to insolence, or fools attend,  
Within myself contented and secure,  
Above what mean ambition can endure, 10  
Nor yet so anxious to obtain a name,  
To bleed for honor on the fields of fame,  
Empty parade is all that heroes know  
Unless fair Virtue hover in the show

But in these walls, where Heaven has fixed my  
stay,

One half of life I'd wish to breathe away  
The fall and winter of each future year  
I'd humbly hope to spend contented here:  
'Mid the fierce ravage of a wintry storm,  
Kind friends to cheer me, moderate wine to  
warm, 20

Securely happy we'd delude the day,  
And smile the seasons cheerfully away  
No needless show my modest dome should  
clam,

Neat and genteel without, within the same:  
Decently furnished to content and please,  
Sufficient for necessity and ease,  
Vain is the pomp of prodigal expense,  
Frugality denotes the man of sense,  
My doors the needy stranger should befriend,  
And hospitality my board attend, 30  
With frugal plenty be my table spread,  
Those, and those only, whom I love be fed:

The meek and indigent my banquet share,  
 Who love the master and approve the fare;  
 Thy mellow vintage, Lisbon! should abound,  
 Pouring a mirthful inspiration round,  
 While laughing Bacchus bathes within the bowl,  
 Love, mirth, and friendship swallow up the soul

I'd have few friends, and those by nature true,  
 Sacred to friendship and to virtue too, 40  
 Though but to few an intimate profest,  
 I'd be no foe, nor useless to the rest  
 Each friend beloved requires a friendly care,  
 His griefs, dejections, and his fate to share,  
 For this my choice should be to bounds confined,

Nor with a burst of passion flood mankind  
 Above the rest, one dear selected friend,  
 Kind to advise, and cautious to offend,  
 To malice, envy, and to pride unknown,  
 Nor apt to censure foibles, but his own, 50  
 Firm in religion, in his morals just,  
 Wise in discerning, and advising best,  
 Learned without pedantry, in temper kind,  
 Soft in his manners, happy in his mind,

But at a decent hour with social heart,  
 In love and humor should my friends depart

Then to my study eager I'd repair,  
 And feast my mind with new refreshment there,

There plunged in tho't my active mind should tread,

Through all the labors of the learned dead, 60  
 Homer, great parent of heroic strains,  
 Virgil, whose genius was improved with pains,

Horace, in whom the wit and courtier joined,  
 Ovid, the tender, amorous, and refined,  
 Keen Juvenal, whose all-correcting page,  
 Lashed daring vice, and shamed an impious age;

Expressive Lucan, who politely sung,  
 With hum'rous Martial tickling as he stung;  
 Elaborate Terence, studious where he smiled,  
 Familiar Plautus, regularly wild; 70  
 With frequent visit these I would survey,  
 And read, and meditate the hours away.

Nor these alone should on my shelves recline,  
 But awful Popel majestically shine,  
 Unequaled bard! Who durst thy praise engage?

Not yet grown reverend with the rust of age;  
 Sure Heaven alone thy art unrivalled taught,  
 To think so well, so well express the thought;  
 What villain hears thee but regrets the smart?  
 But tears the lurking demon from his heart? 80  
 Virtue attends thee with the best applause,  
 Conscious deserit great victor in her cause,  
 She, faithful to thy worth, thy name shall grace,

Beyond all period and beyond all space  
 Go, shine a seraph and thy notes prolong  
 For angels only merit such a song!

Hail, Britain's genius, Milton! deathless name!  
 Blest with a full satiety of fame:  
 Who durst attempt impertinence of Praise? 90  
 Or sap insidious thy eternal bays?  
 For greater song or more exalted fame,  
 Exceeds humanity to make or claim  
 These to peruse, I'd oft forget to dine,  
 And suck refection from each mighty line.  
 Next Addison's great labors should be joined,  
 Praised by all tongues and known to all mankind

With Littleton the tender and correct,  
 And copious Dryden, glorious in defect,  
 Nor would I leave the great and pious Young,  
 Divinely fired, and sublime in song 100  
 Next would I add the unaffected Gay,  
 And gentle Waller, with his flowing lay,  
 Last nature-linimg Thomson should appear,  
 Who link'd eternity within his year  
 But to inform the mind, and mend the heart,  
 Great Tillotson and Butler light impart,  
 Sagacious Newton, with all science blest,  
 And Locke, who always thought and reason'd best

I'd have a handsome seat not far from town,  
 The prospect beauteous, and the taste my own, 110

The fabric modern, faultless the design,  
 Not large, nor yet immoderately fine;  
 But neat economy my mansion boast,  
 Nor should convenience be in beauty lost:  
 Each part should speak superior skill and care,  
 And all the artist be distinguish'd there.

On some small elevation should it stand,  
And a free prospect to the South command;  
Where safe from damp's I'd snuff the whole-  
some gale,

And life and vigor through the lungs inhale, 120  
Eastward my moderate fields should wave  
with grain,

Southward the verdure of a broad champaign,  
Where gamesome flocks, and rampant herds  
might play,

To the warm sunshine of the vernal day;  
Northward, a garden on a slope should lie,  
Finely adjusted to the nicest eye,  
In midst of this should stand a cherry grove,  
A breezy, blooming canopy of love!  
Whose blossom'd boughs the tuneful choir  
should cheer,

And pour regalement on the eye and ear 130  
A gay parterre the vivid box should bound,  
To waft a fragrance through the fields around;  
Where blushing fruits might tempt another  
Eve,

Without another serpent to deceive  
Westward, I'd have a thick-set forest grow,  
Through which the bounded sight should  
scarcely go;

Confus'dly rude, the scenery should impart,  
A view of nature unimprov'd by art  
c. 1752 1757

### THE WISH

By Thomas Godfrey

I ONLY ask a moderate fate,  
And, though not in obscurity,  
I would not, yet, be placed too high,  
Between the two extremes I'd be,  
Not meanly low, nor yet too great,  
From both contempt and envy free

If no glittering wealth I have,  
Content of bounteous heaven I crave,  
For that is more  
Than all the Indian's shining store, 10  
To be unto the dust a slave  
With heart, my little I will use,  
Nor let pain my life devour,  
Or for a griping heir refuse  
Myself one pleasant hour

No stately edifice to rear;  
My wish would bound a small retreat,

In temperate air, and furnished neat:  
No ornaments would I prepare,  
No costly labors of the loom 20  
Should e'er adorn my humble room;  
To gild my roof I naught require  
But the stern Winter's friendly fire.

Free from tumultuous cares and noise,  
If gracious Heaven my wish would give,  
While sweet content augments my joys,  
Thus my remaining hours I'd live  
By arts ignoble never rise,  
The miser's ill-got wealth despise,  
But blest my leisure hours I'd spend, 30  
The Muse enjoying, and my friend  
1765

### ODE

TO MY INGENIOUS FRIEND,  
MR. THOMAS GODFREY

By Nathaniel Evans

WHILE you, dear Tom, are forced to roam,  
In search of fortune, far from home,  
O'er bays, o'er seas and mountains,  
I too, debarred the soft retreat  
Of shady groves, and murmur sweet  
Of silver prattling fountains,

Must mingle with the bustling throng,  
And bear my load of cares along,  
Like any other sinner,  
For where's the ecstasy in this, 10  
To loiter in poetic bliss,  
And go without a dinner?

Flaccus,<sup>1</sup> we know, immortal Bard!  
With mighty kings and statesmen fared,  
And lived in cheerful plenty  
But now, in these degenerate days,  
The slight reward of empty praise,  
Scarce one receives in twenty

Well might the Roman swan, along  
The pleasing Tiber pour his song, 20  
When blessed with ease and quiet,  
Of did he grace Maecenas' board,  
Who would for him throw by the lord,  
And in Falernian riot.

<sup>1</sup> Horace

But dearest Tom! these days are past,  
 And we are in a climate cast  
 Where few the muse can relish,  
 Where all the doctrine now that's told,  
 Is that a shining heap of gold  
 Alone can man embellish.

30

Then since 'tis thus, my honest friend,  
 If you be wise, my strain attend,  
 And counsel sage adhere to;  
 With me, henceforward, join the crowd,  
 And like the rest proclaim aloud,  
 That money is all virtuel

Then may we both, in time, retreat  
 To some fair villa, sweetly neat,  
 To entertain the muses,  
 And then life's noise and trouble leave—  
 Supremely blest, we'll never grieve  
 At what the world refuses

40

1772

# TO MAY

By Nathaniel Evans

Now had the beam of Titan gay  
 Ushered in the blissful May,  
 Scattering from his pearly bed,  
 Fresh dew on every mountain's head,  
 Nature mild and debonair,  
 To thee, fair maid, yields up her care  
 May, with gentle plastic hand,  
 Clothes in flowery robe the land;  
 O'er the vales the cowslip spreads,  
 And eglantine beneath the shades;  
 Violets blue befringe each fountain,  
 Woodbines lace each steepy mountain,  
 Hyacinths their sweets diffuse,  
 And the rose its blush renews,  
 With the rest of Flora's train,  
 Decking lowly dale or plain

10

Through creation's range, sweet May!  
 Nature's children own thy sway—  
 Whether in the crystal flood,  
 Amorous, sport the finny brood;  
 Or the feathered tribes declare  
 That they breathe thy genial air,  
 While they warble in each grove  
 Sweetest notes of artless love,  
 Or their wound the beasts proclaim,  
 Smitten with a fiercer flame,  
 Or the passions higher rise,

20

Sparing none beneath the skies,  
 But swaying soft the human mind  
 With feelings of ecstatic kind—  
 Through wide creation's range, sweet May!  
 All nature's children own thy sway.

30

Of will I, (ere Phosphor's light  
 Quits the glimmering skirts of night)  
 Meet thee in the clover field,  
 Where thy beauties thou shalt yield  
 To my fancy, quick and warm,  
 Listening to the dawn's alarm,  
 Sounded loud by Chaucleer,  
 In peals that sharply pierce the ear  
 And, as Sol his flaming car  
 Urges up the vaulted air,  
 Shunning quick the scorching ray,  
 I will to some covert stray,  
 Coolly bowers or latent dells,  
 Where light-footed Silence dwells,  
 And whispers to my heaven-born dream,  
 Fair Schuylkill, by thy winding stream!  
 There I'll devote full many an hour,  
 To the stull-fingered Morphean power,  
 And entertain my thirsty soul  
 With draughts from Fancy's fairy bowl;  
 Or mount her orb of varied hue,  
 And scenes of heaven and earth review.

40

50

Nor in milder eve's decline,  
 As the sun forgets to shine,  
 And sloping down the ethereal plain,  
 Plunges in the western main,  
 Will I forbear due strain to pay  
 To the song-inspiring May;  
 But as Hesper 'gins to move  
 Round the radiant court of Jove,  
 (Leading through the azure sky  
 All the starry progeny,  
 Emitting prone their silver light,  
 To re-illumine the shades of night)  
 Then, the dewy lawn along,  
 I'll carol forth my grateful song,  
 Viewing with transported eye  
 The blazing orbs that roll on high,  
 Beaming lustre, bright and clear,  
 O'er the glowing hemisphere.  
 Thus from the early blushing morn,  
 Till the dappled eve's return,  
 Will I, in free unlabored lay,  
 Sweetly sing the charming May!

60

70

1772



TO THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

By Phillis Wheatley

WHILE an intrinsic ardor bids me write,  
The muse doth promise to assist my pen.  
'Twas but ere now I left my native shore,  
The sable land of error's darkest night;  
There, sacred Nine, no place for you was  
found

Parent of mercy, 'twas thy powerful hand  
Brought me in safety from the dark abode

To you, bright youths, he points the heights  
of heaven,

To you the knowledge of the depths pro-  
found,

Above, contemplate the ethereal space, 10  
And glorious systems of revolving worlds

Still more, ye sons of science, you've received  
The pleasing sound by messengers from  
heaven;

The Saviour's blood for your Redemption  
flows:

See him with hands stretched out upon the  
cross;

Divine compassion in his bosom glows;  
He hears revilers with oblique regard—  
What condescension in the Son of God?  
When the whole human race by sin had fallen,  
He deigned to die, that they might rise again,  
To live with him beyond the starry sky, 21  
Life without death and glory without end.

Improve your privileges while they stay  
Caress, redeem each moment, which with  
haste

Bears on its rapid wing eternal bliss.  
Let hateful vice, so baneful to the soul,  
Be still avoided with becoming care,  
Suppress the sable monster in its growth  
Ye blooming plants of human race divine,  
An Ethiop tells you 'tis your greatest foe, 30  
It present sweetness turns to endless pain  
And brings eternal ruin on the soul.

1767

## 1720 ~ John Woolman ~ 1772

OUR BEST INSIGHT into the character and workings of the Quaker spirit, as differing from that of the Puritan and the Anglican, is derived from a reading of John Woolman. He was born in New Jersey and brought up in the ways of the Friends. As a young clerk in a country store, he was asked to draw up a bill of sale for a Negro slave, a circumstance which made a deep impression upon his conscience. Successful as a tailor and merchant, he gave up his business lest worldly affairs should engross him too much. He began preaching at twenty-one and after 1743 became an itinerant minister, speaking to congregations of Friends especially against the evils of slavery and capitalistic exploitation, and also preaching to the Indians. In 1772 he went to England as a delegate from the Quakers in Pennsylvania to members of their own sect there, and died at York in a smallpox epidemic.

Woolman's most important work, and the one for which he is remembered to-day, is the *Journal* (1774), begun when he was thirty-five and continued until his death. It is a beautiful account written with appealing simplicity and the directness of a life without guile but with a consuming sympathy for the lowly and distressed.

Charles Lamb, of a very different personality in many ways, urged his friends to get Woolman's *Journal* by heart. Whittier, his fellow Quaker, edited the *Journal* and in characterizing it as "a classic of the inner life," emphasized the Friends' cultivation of the spirit above regard for physical activity and well-being.

Woolman's writings include *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (1754, 1762); *Considerations on Pure Wisdom and Human Policy, on Labor, on Schools, and on the Right Use of the Lord's Outward Gifts* (1758), *Considerations on the True Harmony of Mankind and How It Is to Be Maintained* (1770); *Journal* (1774), and *Caution to the Rich* (1793).

His *Works* appeared in two parts in 1774. John G. Whittier edited the *Journal* and wrote an introduction for it in 1871. The best edition of his works is the *Journal and Essays of John Woolman*, edited with biographical introduction by Amelia M. Gummere (1922).

H. S. Canby's *Classic Americans* (1931), 28-34, gives an enlightening estimate of the place of the Quakers in the thought and life of the United States. See also W. T. Shore, *John Woolman. His Life and Our Times* (1913), M. Kent, "John Woolman Mystic and Reformer," *Hubbert Journal*, January, 1928, R. M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (1921), A. Sharpless, *John Woolman, a Pioneer in Labor Reform* (1920), and E. C. Wilson, "John Woolman: a Social Reformer of the Eighteenth Century," *Economic Review*, April, 1901.

### From the JOURNAL

#### CHAPTER III

#### [Sundry Exercises]

ABOUT this time, believing it good for me to settle, and thinking seriously about a companion, my heart was turned to the Lord with desires that he would give me wisdom to proceed therein agreeable to his will, and he was pleased to give me a well-inclined damsel, Sarah Ellis, to whom I was married the eighteenth day of the eighth month, in the year 1749.

In the fall of the year 1750 died my father, Samuel Woolman, with a fever, aged about sixty years.

In his life-time he manifested much care for us his children, that in our youth we might learn to fear the Lord, often endeavoring to imprint in our minds the true principles of virtue, and particularly to cherish in us a spirit of tenderness, not only towards poor people, but also towards all creatures of which we had the command.

After my return from Carolina, in the year 1746, I made some observations on keeping slaves, which some time before his decease I showed him; and he perused the manuscript,

proposed a few alterations, and appeared well satisfied that I found a concern on that account, and in his last sickness, as I was watching with him one night, he being so far spent that there was no expectation of his recovery, but having the perfect use of his understanding, he asked me concerning the manuscript, whether I expected soon to proceed to take the advice of friends in publishing it? And, after some conversation thereon, said, I have all along been deeply affected with the oppression of the poor Negroes, and now, at last, my concern for them is as great as ever.

By his direction I had wrote his will in a time of health, and that night he desired me to read it to him, which I did, and he said it was agreeable to his mind. He then made mention of his end, which he believed was near, and signified that, though he was sensible of many imperfections in the course of his life, yet his experience of the power of truth, and of the love and goodness of God from time to time, even till now, was such, that he had no doubt but that, in leaving this life, he should enter into one more happy.

The next day his sister Elizabeth came to see him, and told him of the decease of their sister Ann, who died a few days before. He then said, "I reckon Sister Ann was free to

leave this world." Elizabeth said she was. He then said, "I also am free to leave it", and, being in great weakness of body, said, "I hope I shall shortly go to rest." He continued in a weighty frame of mind, and was sensible till near the last

On the second day of the ninth month, in the year 1751, feeling drawings in my mind to visit friends at the Great-Meadows, in the upper part of West-Jersey, with the unity of our monthly-meeting, I went there, and had some searching laborious exercise amongst friends in those parts, and found inward peace therein

In the ninth month of the year 1753, in company with my well-esteemed friend John Sykes, and with the unity of friends, we travelled about two weeks, visiting friends in Bucks-County. We labored in the love of the gospel, according to the measure received, and, through the mercies of Him, who is strength to the poor who trust in Him, we found satisfaction in our visit, and, in the next winter, way opening to visit Friends' families within the compass of our monthly-meeting, partly by the labors of two Friends from Pennsylvania, I joined in some part of the work, having had a desire some time that it might go forward amongst us

About this time, a person at some distance lying sick, his brother came to me to write his will. I knew he had slaves, and, asking his brother, was told he intended to leave them as slaves to his children. As writing is a profitable employ, and as offending sober people was disagreeable to my inclination, I was straitened in my mind, but, as I looked to the Lord, he inclined my heart to his testimony, and I told the man that I believed the practice of continuing slavery to this people was not right, and had a scruple in my mind against doing writings of that kind, that, though many in our society kept them as slaves, still I was not easy to be concerned in it; and desired to be excused from going to write the will. I spake to him in the fear of the Lord, and he made no reply to what I said, but went away. He, also, had some concerns in the practice; and I thought he was displeased with me. In this case I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward

interest, from a motive of divine love, and in regard to truth and righteousness, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, and to a friendship exceeding the friendship of men.

The manuscript before-mentioned having lain by me several years, the publication of it rested weightily upon me, and this year I offered it to the revival of Friends, who, having examined and made some small alterations in it, directed a number of copies thereof to be published, and dispersed amongst Friends.

In the year 1754, I found my mind drawn to join in a visit to Friends families belonging to Chesterfield monthly-meeting, and having the approbation of our own, I went to their monthly-meeting in order to confer with Friends, and see if way opened for it: I had conference with some of their members, the proposal having been opened before in their meeting, and one Friend agreed to join with me as a companion for a beginning; but, when meeting was ended, I felt great distress of mind, and doubted what way to take, or whether to go home and wait for greater clearness. I kept my distress secret, and, going with a friend to his house, my desires were to the great shepherd for his heavenly instruction, and in the morning I felt easy to proceed on the visit, being very low in my mind. And as mine eye was turned to the Lord, waiting in families in deep reverence before Him, he was pleased graciously to afford help, so that we had many comfortable opportunities, and it appeared as a fresh visitation to some young people. I spent several weeks this winter in the service, part of which time was employed near home. And again, in the following winter, I was several weeks in the same service, some part of the time at Shrewsbury, in company with my beloved friend, John Sykes, and have caused humbly to acknowledge, that, through the goodness of the Lord, our hearts were, at times, enlarged in his love, and strength was given to go through the trials which, in the course of our visit, attended us.

From a disagreement between the powers of England and France, it was now a time of trouble on this continent, and an epistle to Friends went forth from our general spring-meeting, which I thought good to give a place in this journal.

*An Epistle from our general spring-meeting of ministers and elders for Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, held at Philadelphia, from the 29th of the third month, to the first of the fourth month, inclusive, 1755.*

To Friends on the continent of America.

Dear Friends,—In an humble sense of divine goodness, and the gracious continuation of God's love to His people, we tenderly salute you, and are at this time therein engaged in mind, that all of us who profess the truth, as held forth and published by our worthy predecessors in this latter age of the world, may keep near to that life which is the light of men, and be strengthened to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, that our trust may not be in man but in the Lord alone, who ruleth in the army of Heaven, and in the kingdoms of men, before whom the earth is "as the dust of the balance, and her inhabitants as grasshoppers." *Isa xl 22*

We (being convinced that the gracious design of the Almighty in sending His Son into the world, was to repair the breach made by disobedience, to finish sin and transgression, that His Kingdom might come, and his will be done on earth as it is in Heaven) have found it to be our duty to cease from those national contests productive of misery and bloodshed, and submit our cause to him, the most high, whose tender love to his children exceeds the most warm affections of natural parents, and who hath promised to his seed throughout the earth, as to one individual, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." *Heb. xiii 5*. And as we, through the gracious dealings of the Lord our God, have had experience of that work which is carried on, "not by earthly might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." *Zech iv. 6* By which operation, that spiritual kingdom is set up, which is to subdue and break in pieces all kingdoms that oppose it, and shall stand for ever; in a deep sense thereof, and of the safety, stability, and peace, there is in it, we are desirous that all who profess the truth, may be inwardly acquainted with it, and thereby be qualified to conduct ourselves in all parts of our life as becomes our peaceable profession And we trust, as there is a faithful con-

tinuance to depend wholly upon the almighty arm, from one generation to another, the peaceable kingdom will gradually be extended "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," *Zech ix 10*, to the completion of those prophecies already begun, that "Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, nor learn war any more." *Isa. ii. 4* *Micah iv. 3*

And, dearly beloved Friends, seeing we have these promises, and believe that God is beginning to fulfil them, let us constantly endeavor to have our minds sufficiently disentangled from the surfeiting cares of this life, and redeemed from the love of the world, that no earthly possessions nor enjoyments may bias our judgments, or turn us from that resignation, and entire trust in God, to which his blessing is most surely annexed, then may we say, "Our redeemer is mighty, he will plead our cause for us" *Jer. i 34* And if, for the farther promoting his most gracious purposes in the earth, he should give us to taste of that bitter cup which his faithful ones have often partaken of, O! that we may be rightly prepared to receive it

And now, dear Friends, with respect to the commotions and stirrings of the powers of the earth at this time near us, we are desirous that none of us may be moved thereat, "but repose ourselves in the munition of that rock that all these shakings shall not move, even in the knowledge and feeling of the eternal power of God, keeping us subjectly given up to his heavenly will, and feel it daily to mortify that which remains in any of us which is of this world, for the worldly part, in any, is the changeable part, and that is up and down, full and empty, joyful and sorrowful, as things go well or ill in this world, for as the truth is but one, and many are made partakers of its spirit, so the world is but one, and many are made partakers of the spirit of it, and so many as do partake of it, so many will be straitened and perplexed with it, but they who are single to the truth, waiting daily to feel the life and virtue of it in their hearts, these shall rejoice in the midst of adversity," and have to experience, with the prophet, that "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive

shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will they rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation." *Hab. iii. 17. 18.*

If, contrary to this, we profess the truth, and, not living under the power and influence of it, are producing fruits disagreeable to the purity thereof, and trust to the strength of man to support ourselves, therein our confidence will be vain. For he, who removed the hedge from his vineyard, and gave it to be trodden under foot, by reason of the wild grapes it produced, (*Isa. v. 5.*) remains unchangeable; and if, for the chastisement of wickedness, and the farther promoting his own glory, he doth arise, even to shake terribly the earth, who then may oppose him, and prosper!

We remain, in the love of the gospel, your friends and brethren.

Signed by fourteen Friends.

Scrupling to do writings, relative to keeping slaves, having been a means of sundry small trials to me, in which I have so evidently felt my own will set aside, I think it good to mention a few of them—Tradesmen and retailers of goods, who depend on their business for a living, are naturally inclined to keep the good-will of their customers, nor is it a pleasant thing for young men to be under any necessity to question the judgment or honesty of elderly men, and more especially of such as have a fair reputation. Deep-rooted customs, though wrong, are not easily altered, but it is the duty of every one to be firm in that which they certainly know is right for them. A charitable benevolent man, well acquainted with a Negro, may, I believe, under some circumstances, keep him in his family as a servant, from no other motives than the Negro's good, but man, as man, knows not what shall be after him, nor hath assurance that his children will attain to that perfection in wisdom and goodness necessary rightly to exercise such power. It is clear to me, that I ought not to be the scribe where wills are drawn, in which some children are made absolute masters over others during life.

About this time, an ancient man, of good

esteem in the neighborhood, came to my house to get his will written; he had young Negroes; and I asked him privately, how he purposed to dispose of them? He told me. I then said, "I cannot write thy will without breaking my own peace"; and respectfully gave him my reasons for it. He signified that he had a choice that I should have written it; but as I could not, consistent with my conscience, he did not desire it. And so he got it written by some other person. And, a few years after, there being great alterations in his family, he came again to get me to write his will. His Negroes were yet young, and his son, to whom he intended to give them, was, since he first spoke to me, from a libertine, become a sober young man, and he supposed, that I would have been free, on that account, to write it. We had much friendly talk on the subject, and then deferred it. A few days after, he came again, and directed their freedom, and then I wrote his will.

Near the time the last-mentioned Friend first spoke to me, a neighbor received a bad bruise in his body, and sent for me to bleed him; which being done, he desired me to write his will. I took notes, and, amongst other things he told me to which of his children he gave his young Negro. I considered the pain and distress he was in, and knew not how it would end, so I wrote his will, save only that part concerning his slave, and carrying it to his bedside, read it to him, and then told him, in a friendly way, that I could not write any instruments by which my fellow-creatures were made slaves, without bringing trouble on my own mind. I let him know that I charged nothing for what I had done, and desired to be excused from doing the other part in the way he proposed. We then had a serious conference on the subject, at length he agreeing to set her free, I finished his will.

Having found drawings in my mind to visit Friends on Long Island, after obtaining a certificate from our monthly-meeting, I set off on the twelfth day of the fifth month, in the year 1756. When I reached the island, I lodged the first night at the house of my dear friend, Richard Hallet; the next day, being the first of the week, I was at the meeting in Newtown; in which we experienced the renewed

manifestations of the love of Jesus Christ, to the comfort of the honest-hearted. I went that night to Flushing; and the next day, in company with my beloved friend, Matthew Franklin, we crossed the ferry at Whitestone, were at three meetings on the main, and then returned to the island; where I spent the remainder of the week in visiting meetings. The Lord, I believe, hath a people in those parts, who are honestly inclined to serve Him, but many, I fear, are too much clogged with the things of this life, and do not come forward bearing the cross in such faithfulness as He calls for.

My mind was deeply engaged in this visit, both in public and private, and, at several places, observing that they had slaves, I found myself under a necessity in a friendly way, to labor with them on that subject, expressing, as way opened, the inconsistency of that practice with the purity of the Christian Religion, and the ill effects of it manifested amongst us

The latter end of the week, their yearly-meeting began, at which were our friends John Scarborough, Jane Hoskins, and Susanna Brown, from Pennsylvania. The public meetings were large, and measurably favored with divine goodness

The exercise of my mind, at this meeting, was chiefly on account of those who were considered as the foremost rank in the society; and, in a meeting of ministers and elders, way opened, that I expressed in some measure what lay upon me, and, at a time when Friends were met for transacting the affairs of the church, having set a while silent, I felt a weight on my mind, and stood up, and, through the gracious regard of our heavenly Father, strength was given fully to clear myself of a burthen, which, for some days, had been increasing upon me.

Through the humbling dispensations of divine Providence, men are sometimes fitted for His service. The messages of the prophet Jeremiah, were so disagreeable to the people, and so reverse to the spirit they lived in, that he became the object of their reproach; and, in the weakness of nature, thought of desisting from his prophetic office; but, saith he, "His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I was weary with

forbearing, and could not stay." I saw at this time, that if I was honest in declaring that which truth opened in me, I could not please all men; and labored to be content in the way of my duty, however disagreeable to my own inclination. After this I went homeward, taking Woodbridge, and Plainfield in my way; in both which meetings, the pure influence of divine love was manifested, in an humbling sense whereof I went home, having been out about twenty-four days, and rode about three hundred and sixteen miles.

While I was out on this journey, my heart was much affected with a sense of the state of the churches in our southern provinces; and, believing the Lord was calling me to some farther labor amongst them, I was bowed in reverence before Him, with fervent desires that I might find strength to resign myself up to His heavenly will

Until this year, 1756, I continued to retail goods, besides following my trade as a tailor; about which time, I grew uneasy on account of my business growing too cumbersome. I had begun with selling trummings for garments, and from thence proceeded to sell cloths and linens, and at length, having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open; but I felt a stop in my mind.

Through the mercies of the Almighty, I had, in a good degree, learned to be content with a plain way of living. I had but a small family, and, on serious consideration, I believed truth did not require me to engage in much cumbering affairs. It had been my general practice to buy and sell things really useful; things that served chiefly to please the vain mind in people. I was not easy to trade in; seldom did it; and, whenever I did, I found it [to] weaken me as a Christian.

The increase of business became my burthen, for, though my natural inclination was toward merchandise, yet I believed truth required me to live more free from outward cumbers: and there was now a strife in my mind between the two; and in this exercise my prayers were put up to the Lord, who graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his holy will: Then I lessened my outward business; and, as

I had opportunity, told my customers of my intention, that they might consider what shop to turn to: and, in a while, wholly laid down merchandise, following my trade, as a tailor, myself only, having no apprentice. I also had a nursery of apple-trees; in which I employed some of my time in hoeing, grafting, trumming, and inoculating. In merchandise it is the custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on credit, and poor people often get in debt, and when payment is expected, not having wherewith to pay, their creditors often sue for it at law. Having often observed occurrences of this kind, I found it good for me to advise poor people to take such goods as were most useful and not costly.

In the time of trading, I had an opportunity of seeing, that the too liberal use of spirituous liquors, and the custom of wearing too costly apparel, led some people into great inconveniences; and these two things appear to be often connected; for, by not attending to that use of things which is consistent with universal righteousness, there is an increase of labor which extends beyond what our heavenly Father intends for us and by great labor, and often by much sweating, there is, even among such as are not drunkards, a craving of some liquors to revive the spirits; that, partly by the luxurious drinking of some, and partly by the drinking of others (led to it through immoderate labor), very great quantities of rum are every year expended in our colonies, the greater part of which we should have no need of, did we steadily attend to pure wisdom.

Where men take pleasure in feeling their minds elevated with strong drink, and so indulge their appetite as to disorder their understandings, neglect their duty as members in a family or civil society, and cast off all regard to religion, their case is much to be pitied, and where such, whose lives are for the most part regular, and whose examples have a strong influence on the minds of others, adhere to some customs which powerfully draw to the use of more strong liquor than pure wisdom allows, thus also, as it hinders the spreading of the spirit of meekness, and strengthens the hands of the more excessive drinkers, is a case to be lamented.

As every degree of luxury hath some con-

nection with evil, those who profess to be disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as leaders of the people, should have that mind in them which was also in Christ, and so stand separate from every wrong way, as a means of help to the weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the heat, and taken spirits to revive me, I have found, by experience, that in such circumstances the mind is not so calm, nor so fitly disposed for divine meditation, as when all such extremes are avoided, and I have felt an increasing care to attend to that holy spirit which sets bounds to our desires, and leads those, who faithfully follow it, to apply all the gifts of divine providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such, as have the care of great estates, attend with singleness of heart to this heavenly instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind, that men love their neighbors as themselves, they would have wisdom given them to manage, without finding occasion to employ some people in the luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labor too hard; but, for want of steadily regarding this principle of divine love, a selfish spirit takes place in the minds of people, which is attended with darkness and manifold confusion in the world.

Though trading in things useful is an honest employ; yet, through the great number of superfluities which are bought and sold, and through the corruption of the times, they, who apply to merchandise for a living, have great need to be well experienced in that precept which the prophet Jeremiah laid down for his scribe. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not."

In the winter, this year, I was engaged with Friends in visiting families, and, through the goodness of the Lord, we had oftentimes experience of His heart-tendering presence amongst us

#### CHAPTER XI

#### *[Voyage to England]*

Having been some time under a religious concern to prepare for crossing the seas, in order to visit Friends in the northern parts of England, and more particularly in Yorkshire, after consideration I thought it expedient to

inform Friends of it at our Monthly Meeting at Burlington, who, having unity with me therein, gave me a certificate. I afterwards communicated the same to our Quarterly Meeting, and they likewise certified their concurrence. Some time after, at the General Spring Meeting of ministers and elders, I thought it my duty to acquaint them with the religious exercise which attended my mind, and they likewise signified their unity there-  
with by a certificate, dated the 24th of third month, 1772, directed to Friends in Great Britain.

In the fourth month following I thought the time was come for me to make some inquiry for a suitable conveyance, and as my concern was principally towards the northern parts of England, it seemed most proper to go in a vessel bound to Liverpool or Whitehaven. While I was at Philadelphia deliberating on this subject I was informed that my beloved friend Samuel Emlen, junior, intended to go to London, and had taken a passage for himself in the cabin of the ship called the Mary and Elizabeth, of which James Sparks was master, and John Head, of the city of Philadelphia, one of the owners, and feeling a draught in my mind towards the steerage of the same ship, I went first and opened to Samuel the feeling I had concerning it.

My beloved friend wept when I spake to him, and appeared glad that I had thoughts of going in the vessel with him, though my prospect was toward the steerage, and he offering to go with me, we went on board, first into the cabin,—a commodious room,—and then into the steerage, where we sat down on a chest, the sailors being busy about us. The owner of the ship also came and sat down with us. My mind was turned towards Christ, the Heavenly Counsellor, and feeling at this time my own will subjected, my heart was contrite before Him. A motion was made by the owner to go and sit in the cabin, as a place more retired; but I felt easy to leave the ship, and, making no agreement as to a passage in her, told the owner if I took a passage in the ship I believed it would be in the steerage, but did not say much as to my exercise in that case.

After I went to my lodgings, and the case was a little known in town, a Friend laid be-

fore me the great inconvenience attending a passage in the steerage, which for a time appeared very discouraging to me.

I soon after went to bed, and my mind was under a deep exercise before the Lord, whose helping hand was manifested to me as I slept that night, and His love strengthened my heart. In the morning I went with two Friends on board the vessel again, and after a short time spent therein, I went with Samuel Emlen to the house of the owner, to whom, in the hearing of Samuel only, I opened my exercise in relation to a scruple I felt with regard to a passage in the cabin, in substance as follows —

“That on the outside of that part of the ship where the cabin was I observed sundry sorts of carved work and imagery, that in the cabin I observed some superfluity of workmanship of several sorts, and that according to the ways of men’s reckoning, the sum of money to be paid for a passage in that apartment has some relation to the expense of furnishing it to please the minds of such as give way to a conformity to this world, and that in this, as in other cases, the moneys received from the passengers are calculated to defray the cost of these superfluities, as well as the other expenses of their passage. I therefore felt a scruple with regard to paying my money to be applied to such purposes.”

As my mind was now opened, I told the owner that I had, at several times, in my travels, seen great oppressions on this continent, at which my heart had been much affected and brought into a feeling of the state of the sufferers, and having many times been engaged in the fear and love of God to labor with those under whom the oppressed have been borne down and afflicted, I have often perceived that with a view to get riches and to provide estates for children, that they may live conformably to the customs and honors of this world, many are entangled in the spirit of oppression, and the exercise of my soul had been such that I could not find peace in joining in anything which I saw was against that wisdom which is pure.

After this I agreed for a passage in the steerage; and hearing that Joseph White had desired to see me, I went to his house, and next day home, where I tarried two nights. Early



the next morning I parted with my family under a sense of the humbling hand of God upon me, and, going to Philadelphia, had an opportunity with several of my beloved friends, who appeared to be concerned for me on account of the unpleasant situation of that part of the vessel in which I was likely to lodge. In these opportunities my mind, through the mercies of the Lord, was kept low in an inward waiting for His help, and Friends having expressed their desire that I might have a more convenient place than the steerage, did not urge it, but appeared disposed to leave me to the Lord.

Having stayed two nights at Philadelphia, I went the next day to Derby Monthly Meeting, where through the strength of Divine love my heart was enlarged towards the youth there present, under which I was helped to labor in some tenderness of spirit. I lodged at William Horn's and afterwards went to Chester, where I met with Samuel Emlen, and we went on board 1st of fifth month, 1772. As I sat alone on the deck I felt a satisfactory evidence that my proceedings were not in my own will, but under the power of the cross of Christ.

Seventh of fifth month—We have had rough weather mostly since I came on board, and the passengers, James Reynolds, John Till Adams, Sarah Logan and her hired maid, and John Bispham, all sea-sick at times, from which sickness, through the tender mercies of my Heavenly Father, I have been preserved, my afflictions now being of another kind. There appeared an openness in the minds of the master of the ship and in the cabin passengers towards me. We are often together on the deck, and sometimes in the cabin. My mind, through the merciful help of the Lord, hath been preserved in a good degree watchful and quiet, for which I have great cause to be thankful.

As my lodging in the steerage, now near a week, hath afforded me sundry opportunities of seeing, hearing, and feeling with respect to the life and spirit of many poor sailors, an exercise of soul hath attended me in regard to placing out children and youth where they may be likely to be exemplified and instructed in the pure fear of the Lord.

Being much among the seamen I have, from a motion of love, taken sundry opportunities with one of them at a time, and have in free conversation labored to turn their minds towards the fear of the Lord. This day we had a meeting in the cabin, where my heart was contrite under a feeling of Divine love.

I believe a communication with different parts of the world by sea is at times consistent with the will of our Heavenly Father, and to educate some youth in the practice of sailing, I believe may be right; but how lamentable is the present corruption of the world! How impure are the channels through which trade is conducted! How great is the danger to which poor lads are exposed when placed on shipboard to learn the art of sailing! Five lads training up for the seas were on board this ship. Two of them were brought up in our Society, and the other, by name James Naylor, is a member, to whose father James Naylor, mentioned in Sewel's history, appears to have been uncle. I often feel a tenderness of heart towards these poor lads, and at times look at them as though they were my children according to the flesh.

O that all may take heed and beware of covetousness! O that all may learn of Christ, who was meek and lowly of heart! Then in faithfully following him he will teach us to be content with food and raiment without respect to the customs or honors of this world. Men thus redeemed will feel a tender concern for their fellow-creatures, and a desire that those in the lowest stations may be assisted and encouraged, and where owners of ships attain to the perfect law of liberty and are doers of the Word, these will be blessed in their deeds.

A ship at sea commonly sails all night, and the seamen take their watches four hours at a time. Rising to work in the night, it is not commonly pleasant in any case, but in dark rainy nights it is very disagreeable, even though each man were furnished with all conveniences. If, after having been on deck several hours in the night, they come down into the steerage soaking wet, and are so closely stowed that proper convenience for change of garments is not easily come at, but for want of proper room their wet garments are thrown in heaps, and sometimes, through much crowding, are

trodden under foot in going to their lodgings and getting out of them, and it is difficult at times for each to find his own. Here are trials for the poor sailors.

Now, as I have been with them in my lodge, my heart hath often yearned for them, and tender desires have been raised in me that all owners and masters of vessels may dwell in the love of God and therein act uprightly, and by seeking less for gain and looking carefully to their ways they may earnestly labor to remove all cause of provocation from the poor seamen, so that they may neither fret nor use excess of strong drink; for, indeed, the poor creatures, in the wet and cold, seem to apply at times to strong drink to supply the want of other convenience. Great reformation is wanting in the world, and the necessity of it among those who do business on great waters hath at this time been abundantly opened before me.

Eighth of fifth month—This morning the clouds gathered, the wind blew strong from the southeast, and before noon so increased that sailing appeared dangerous. The seamen then bound up some of their sails and took down others, and the storm increasing they put the deadlights, so called, into the cabin windows and lighted a lamp as at night. The wind now blew vehemently, and the sea wrought to that degree that an awful seriousness prevailed in the cabin, in which I spent, I believe, about seventeen hours, for the cabin passengers had given me frequent invitations, and I thought the poor wet toiling seamen had need of all the room in the crowded steerage. They now ceased from sailing and put the vessel in the posture called lying to.

My mind during this tempest, through the gracious assistance of the Lord, was preserved in a good degree of resignation, and at times I expressed a few words in his love to my shipmates in regard to the all-sufficiency of Him who formed the great deep, and whose care is so extensive that a sparrow falls not without his notice, and thus in a tender frame of mind I spoke to them of the necessity of our yielding in true obedience to the instructions of our Heavenly Father, who sometimes through adversities intendeth our refinement.

About eleven at night I went out on the

deck. The sea wrought exceedingly, and the high, foaming waves round about had in some sort the appearance of fire, but did not give much if any light. The sailor at the helm said he lately saw a corporant at the head of the mast. I observed that the master of the ship ordered the carpenter to keep on the deck; and, though he said little, I apprehended his care was that the carpenter with his axe might be in readiness in case of any extremity. Soon after this the vehemency of the wind abated, and before morning they again put the ship under sail.

Tenth of fifth month—It being the first day of the week and fine weather, we had a meeting in the cabin, at which most of the seamen were present, this meeting was to me a strengthening time. As I continue to lodge in the steerage I feel an openness this morning to express something further of the state of my mind in respect to poor lads bound apprentice to learn the art of sailing. As I believe sailing is of use in the world, a labor of soul attends me that the pure counsel of truth may be humbly waited for in this case by all concerned in the business of the seas. A pious father whose mind is exercised for the everlasting welfare of his child may not with a peaceable mind place him out to an employment among a people whose common course of life is manifestly corrupt and profane. Great is the present defect among seafaring men in regard to virtue and piety, and, by reason of an abundant traffic and many ships being used for war, so many people are employed on the sea that the subject of placing lads to this employment appears very weighty.

When I remember the saying of the Most High through his prophet, "Thus people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise," and think of placing children among such to learn the practice of sailing, the consistency of it with a pious education seems to me like that mentioned by the prophet, "There is no answer from God."

Profane examples are very corrupting and very forcible. And as my mind day after day and night after night hath been affected with a sympathizing tenderness towards poor children who are put to the employment of sailors, I have sometimes had weighty conversation

with the sailors in the steerage, who were mostly respectful to me and became more so the longer I was with them. They mostly appeared to take kindly what I said to them, but their minds were so deeply impressed with the almost universal depravity among sailors

that the poor creatures in their answers to me have revived in my remembrance that of the degenerate Jews a little before the captivity, as repeated by Jeremiah the prophet, "There is no hope."

1756-1772

1774

1735 ~ Michel-Guillaume

Jean de Crèvecoeur ~ 1813

CRÈVECOEUR was born near Caen in Normandy in 1735. Although he was descended from a distinguished family, he chose almost from boyhood to be a wanderer and adventurer. After an education partly obtained in England, he served with Montcalm in Canada during the last part of the French and Indian War, explored the lands between the Great Lakes and the Ohio River, perhaps as a map maker, and after the peace traveled extensively in New York and Pennsylvania, and in other English colonies. In 1769 he married and settled on a farm in Orange County, New York. Here he greatly enjoyed a bucolic life and penned the essays later gathered in his two books.

This idyllic existence was broken by the Revolution, with which he did not sympathize. Refusing to join either party, he was suspected by both, and in 1780 he returned temporarily to Europe. His *Letters from an American Farmer* was published in London in 1782 under the pseudonym of J. Hector St. John, and was soon reprinted in France and America.

With the close of the Revolution he returned to New York as French consul, to find that Indians had burned his house and killed his wife. After recovering his children, he lived in New York, continuing his interest in American agriculture by introducing the cultivation of various plants, among them alfalfa and the vetches. In 1790 he returned to France, where he spent the remaining twenty-three years of his life.

Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, dedicated to the liberal French philosopher Raynal, manifests minute and curious observation of the details of nature and country life, combined with a romantic idealization of both. His praise of the simple life and his sensibility show him akin to Rousseau, Richardson, and Burns. A friend of Jefferson and Franklin, he shares the former's preference for a primarily agricultural state. He is also the earliest writer to stress the "melting-pot" conception of the American race. Occasionally eccentric in construction and style, his essays often mingle the vigor of good English prose with the clarity of French.

The best edition of *Letters from an American Farmer* is the reprint of the English edition of 1792 issued in 1904 with a preface by W. P. Trent and an introduction by Ludwig Lewisohn. The book also appears in Everyman's Library. Crèvecoeur's other books are *Voyage dans la Haute Pensylvanie et dans l'État de New-York* (3 vols., Paris, 1801); and *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America*, edited by H. L. Bourdin, R. H. Gabriel, and S. T. Williams, and first issued in 1925. The best biography is by Julia Post Mitchell (1916). The article in *DAB* is by S. T. Williams. A careful critical study of his work is H. C. Rice's *Le Cultivateur Américain*, Paris, 1933. See also several studies by Bourdin and Williams: "Crèvecoeur on the Susquehanna," *Yale Review*, April, 1925; "Crèvecoeur the Loyalist," *Nation*, Sept. 23, 1925; "Unpublished Manuscripts of Crèvecoeur," *Studies in Philology*, July, 1925; and "The American Farmer Returns," *North American Review*, Sept., 1925; and Robert de Crèvecoeur's *Saint Jean de Crèvecoeur: Sa Vie et Ses Ouvrages* (1883).

### From LETTERS FROM AN AMERICAN FARMER

#### LETTER III

#### *What Is an American?*

I WISH I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. He must greatly rejoice that he lived at a time to see this fair country discovered and settled, he must necessarily feel a share of national pride, when he views the chain of settlements which embellishes these extended shores. When he says to himself, this is the work of my countrymen, who, when convulsed by factions, afflicted by a variety of miseries and wants, restless and impatient, took refuge here. They brought along with them their national genius, to which they principally owe what liberty they enjoy and what substance they possess. Here he sees the industry of his native country displayed in a new manner and traces in their works the embryos of all the arts, sciences, and ingenuity which flourish in Europe. Here he beholds fair cities, substantial villages, extensive fields, an immense country filled with decent houses, good roads, orchards, meadows, and bridges, where a hundred years ago all was wild, woody, and uncultivated! What a train of pleasing ideas this fair spectacle must suggest, it is a prospect which must inspire a good citizen with the most heartfelt pleasure. The difficulty consists in the manner of viewing so extensive a scene. He is arrived on a new

continent, a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one, no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts, he views not the hostile castle and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabin where cattle and men help to keep each other warm and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. The meanest of our log-houses is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest titles our towns afford; that of a farmer is the only appellation of the rural inhabitants of our country. It must take some time ere he can reconcile himself to our dictionary, which is but short in words of

dignity and names of honor. There, on a Sunday, he sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted or riding in their own humble wagons. There is not among them an esquire, saving the unlettered magistrate. There he sees a parson as simple as his flock, a farmer who does not riot on the labor of others. We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed: we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be, nor is thus pleasing equality so transitory as many others are. Many ages will not see the shores of our great lakes replenished with inland nations, nor the unknown bounds of North America entirely peopled. Who can tell how far it extends? Who can tell the millions of men whom it will feed and contain? for no European foot has as yet traveled half the extent of this mighty continent!

The next wish of this traveler will be to know whence came all these people? They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. The eastern provinces must indeed be excepted as being the unmixed descendants of Englishmen. I have heard many wish that they had been more intermixed also for my part, I am no wisher, and think it much better as it has happened. They exhibit a most conspicuous figure in this great and variegated picture, they too enter for a great share in the pleasing perspective displayed in these thirteen provinces. I know it is fashionable to reflect on them, but I respect them for what they have done, for the accuracy and wisdom with which they have settled their territory; for the decency of their manners; for their early love of letters; their ancient college, the first in this hemisphere; for their industry, which to me who am but a farmer, is the criterion of everything. There never was a people, situated as they are, who with so ungrateful a soil have done more in so short a time. Do you think that the monarchical ingredients which are more prevalent in other governments have purged them from all foul stains? Their histories assert the contrary.

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together,

and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? Not urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them, new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system, here they are become men. In Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mold, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war, but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor, here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption, they receive ample rewards for their labors; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which men can possibly require. This is the great operation daily performed by our laws. From whence proceed these laws? From our government. Whence the government? It is derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown. This is the great chain which links us all, this is the picture which every province exhibits, Nova Scotia excepted. There the crown has done all; either there were no people who had genius, or it was not much attended to; the consequence is, that the province is very thinly inhabited indeed; the power of the crown in conjunction with the mosquitos has prevented men from settling there. Yet some parts of it flourished once, and it contained a mild, harm-

less set of people. But for the fault of a few leaders, the whole were banished. The greatest political error the crown ever committed in America was to cut off men from a country which wanted nothing but men!

What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself, were the only cords that tied him: his country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence. *Ubi panis ibi patria*,<sup>1</sup> is the motto of all emigrants. What then is the American, this new man? He is either a European or the descendant of a European; hence that strange mixture of blood which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labor; his labor is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest*; can it want a stronger allurements? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help

<sup>1</sup> Where one can get a living, there is his country

their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all, without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence.—Thus is an American

British America is divided into many provinces, forming a large association, scattered along a coast 1500 miles [in] extent and about 200 wide. This society I would fain examine, at least such as it appears in the middle provinces, if it does not afford that variety of tinges and gradations which may be observed in Europe, we have colors peculiar to ourselves. For instance, it is natural to conceive that those who live near the sea must be very different from those who live in the woods; the intermediate space will afford a separate and distinct class

Men are like plants, the goodness and flavor of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment. Here you will find but few crimes, these have acquired as yet no root among us. I wish I was able to trace all my ideas; if my ignorance prevents me from describing them properly, I hope I shall be able to delineate a few of the outlines, which are all I propose.

Those who live near the sea feed more on fish than on flesh and often encounter that boisterous element. This renders them more bold and enterprising, this leads them to neglect the confined occupations of the land. They see and converse with a variety of people; their intercourse with mankind becomes extensive. The sea inspires them with a love of traffic, a desire of transporting produce from one place to another, and leads them to a variety of resources which supply the place

of labor. Those who inhabit the middle settlements, by far the most numerous, must be very different, the simple cultivation of the earth purifies them, but the indulgences of the government, the soft remonstrances of religion, the rank of independent freeholders, must necessarily inspire them with sentiments very little known in Europe among people of the same class. What do I say? Europe has no such class of men; the early knowledge they acquire, the early bargains they make, give them a great degree of sagacity. As freemen they will be litigious, pride and obstinacy are often the cause of lawsuits, the nature of our laws and governments may be another. As citizens it is easy to imagine that they will carefully read the newspapers, enter into every political disquisition, freely blame or censure governors and others. As farmers, they will be careful and anxious to get as much as they can, because what they get is their own. As northern men they will love the cheerful cup. As Christians, religion curbs them not in their opinions, the general indulgence leaves every one to think for themselves in spiritual matters, the laws inspect our actions, our thoughts are left to God. Industry, good living, selfishness, litigiousness, country politics, the pride of freemen, religious indifference,<sup>1</sup> are their characteristics. If you recede still farther from the sea, you will come into more modern<sup>2</sup> settlements, they exhibit the same strong lineaments, in a ruder appearance. Religion seems to have still less influence, and their manners are less improved.

Now we arrive near the great woods, near the last inhabited districts, there men seem to be placed still farther beyond the reach of government, which in some measure leaves them to themselves. How can it pervade every corner, as they were driven there by misfortunes, necessity of beginnings, desire of acquiring large tracts of land, idleness, frequent want of economy, ancient debts, the reunion of such people does not afford a very pleasing spectacle. When discord, want of unity and friendship, when either drunkenness or idleness prevail in such remote districts, contention, inactivity, and wretchedness must ensue.

There are not the same remedies to these evils

as in a long established community. The few magistrates they have are in general little better than the rest, they are often in a perfect state of war—that of man against man, sometimes decided by blows, sometimes by means of the law, that of man against every wild inhabitant of these venerable woods, of which they are come to dispossess them. There men appear to be no better than carnivorous animals of a superior rank, living on the flesh of wild animals when they can catch them, and when they are not able, they subsist on grain. He who would wish to see America in its proper light and have a true idea of its feeble beginnings and barbarous rudiments must visit our extended line of frontiers where the last settlers dwell, and where he may see the first labors of settlement, the mode of clearing the earth, in all their different appearances; where men are wholly left dependent on their native tempers, and on the spur of uncertain industry, which often fails when not sanctified by the efficacy of a few moral rules. There, remote from the power of example and check of shame, many families exhibit the most hideous parts of our society. They are a kind of forlorn hope, preceding by ten or twelve years the most respectable army of veterans which come after them. In that space, prosperity will polish some, vice and the law will drive off the rest, who uniting again with others like themselves will recede still farther, making room for more industrious people, who will finish their improvements, convert the loghouse into a convenient habitation, and rejoicing that the first heavy labors are finished, will change in a few years that hitherto barbarous country into a fine, fertile, well regulated district. Such is our progress, such is the march of the Europeans toward the interior parts of this continent. In all societies there are offcasts; this impure part serves as our precursors or pioneers, my father himself was one of that class,<sup>1</sup> but he came upon honest principles, and was therefore one of the few who held fast, by good conduct and temperance, he transmitted to me his fair inheritance, when not above one in fourteen of his contemporaries had the same good fortune.

Forty years ago this smiling country was

<sup>1</sup> disregard of religious differences

<sup>2</sup> recent

<sup>1</sup> a piece of literary fiction on Crèvecoeur's part

thus inhabited; it is now purged, a general decency of manners prevails throughout, and such has been the fate of our best countries

Exclusive of those general characteristics, each province has its own, founded on the government, climate, mode of husbandry, customs, and peculiarity of circumstances Europeans submit insensibly to these great powers, and become, in the course of a few generations, not only Americans in general, but either 10 Pennsylvanians, Virginians, or provincials under some other name. Whoever traverses the continent must easily observe those strong differences, which will grow more evident in time. The inhabitants of Canada, Massachusetts, the middle provinces, the southern ones, will be as different as their climates, their only points of unity will be those of religion and language

As I have endeavored to show you how 20 Europeans become Americans, it may not be disagreeable to show you likewise how the various Christian sects introduced wear out, and how religious indifference becomes prevalent. When any considerable number of a particular sect happen to dwell contiguous to each other, they immediately erect a temple and there worship the Divinity agreeably to their own peculiar ideas. Nobody disturbs them. If any new sect springs up in Europe, 30 it may happen that many of its professors will come and settle in America. As they bring their zeal with them, they are at liberty to make proselytes if they can and to build a meeting [house] and to follow the dictates of their consciences, for neither the government nor any other power interferes. If they are peaceable subjects and are industrious, what is it to their neighbors how and in what manner they think fit to address their prayers to the Supreme Being? But if the sectaries are not settled close together, if they are mixed with other denominations, their zeal will cool for want of fuel and will be extinguished in a little time. Then the Americans become as to religion what they are as to country, allied to all. In them the name of Englishman, Frenchman, and European is lost, and, in like manner, the strict modes of Christianity as practiced in Europe are lost also. This effect will extend itself still farther hereafter, and though this

may appear to you as a strange idea, yet it is a very true one. I shall be able perhaps hereafter to explain myself better, in the meanwhile, let the following example serve as my first justification

Let us suppose you and I to be traveling; we observe that in this house, to the right, lives a Catholic who prays to God as he has been taught and believes in transubstantiation; he works and raises wheat, he has a large family of children, all hale and robust; his belief, his prayers offend nobody. About one mile farther on the same road, his next neighbor may be a good, honest, plodding German Lutheran who addresses himself to the same God, the God of all, agreeably to the modes he has been educated in and believes in consubstantiation, by so doing he scandalizes nobody, he also works in his fields, embellishes the earth, clears swamps, etc. What has the world to do with his Lutheran principles? He persecutes nobody, and nobody persecutes him, he visits his neighbors, and his neighbors visit him. Next to him lives a seceder,<sup>1</sup> the most enthusiastic of all sectaries, his zeal is hot and fiery, but separated as he is from others of the same complexion, he has no congregation of his own to resort to, where he might cabal and mingle religious pride with worldly obstinacy. He likewise raises good crops, his house is handsomely painted, his orchard is one of the fairest in the neighborhood. How does it concern the welfare of the country or of the province at large what this man's religious sentiments are, or really whether he has any at all? He is a good farmer, he is a sober, peaceable, good citizen, William Penn himself would not wish for more. This is the visible character, the invisible one is only 40 guessed at and is nobody's business. Next again lives a Low Dutchman who implicitly believes the rules laid down by the synod of Dort.<sup>2</sup> He conceives no other idea of a clergyman than that of an hired man, if he does his work well he will pay him the stipulated sum, if not, he will dismiss him and do without his sermons, and let his church be shut up

<sup>1</sup> a member of an independent Calvinistic sect

<sup>2</sup> The Synod of Dort, or Dordrecht, 1618-19, established the ecclesiastical canon of the Dutch Reformed Church



for years. But notwithstanding this coarse idea, you will find his house and farm to be the neatest in all the country; and you will judge by his wagon and fat horses that he thinks more of the affairs of this world than of those of the next. He is sober and laborious, therefore he is all he ought to be as to the affairs of this life, as for those of the next, he must trust to the great Creator. Each of these people instruct their children as well as they can, but these instructions are feeble compared to those which are given to the youth of the poorest class in Europe. Their children will therefore grow up less zealous and more indifferent in matters of religion than their parents. The foolish vanity, or rather the fury of making proselytes, is unknown here; they have no time, the seasons call for all their attention, and thus in a few years this mixed neighborhood will exhibit a strange religious medley that will be neither pure Catholicism nor pure Calvinism. A very perceptible indifference even in the first generation will become apparent, and it may happen that the daughter of the Catholic will marry the son of the seceder, and settle by themselves at a distance from their parents. What religious education will they give their children? A very imperfect one. If there happens to be in the neighborhood any place of worship—we will suppose a Quaker's meeting—rather than not show their fine clothes, they will go to it, and some of them may perhaps attach themselves to that society. Others will remain in a perfect state of indifference; the children of these zealous parents will not be able to tell what their religious principles are, and their grandchildren still less. The neighborhood of a place of worship generally leads them to it, and the action of going thither is the strongest evidence they can give of their attachment to any sect. The Quakers are the only people who retain a fondness for their own mode of worship, for be they ever so far separated from each other, they hold a sort of communion with the society and seldom depart from its rules, at least in this country. Thus all sects are mixed as well as all nations; thus religious indifference is imperceptibly disseminated from one end of the continent to the other, which is at present one of the

strongest characteristics of the Americans. Where thus will reach no one can tell, perhaps it may leave a vacuum fit to receive other systems. Persecution, religious pride, the love of contradiction, are the food of what the world commonly calls religion. These motives have ceased here; zeal in Europe is confined; here it evaporates in the great distance it has to travel; there it is a grain of powder inclosed; here it burns away in the open air and consumes without effect.

But to return to our back settlers. I must tell you that there is something in the proximity of the woods which is very singular. It is with men as it is with the plants and animals that grow and live in the forests; they are entirely different from those that live in the plains. I will candidly tell you all my thoughts, but you are not to expect that I shall advance any reasons. By living in or near the woods, their actions are regulated by the wildness of the neighborhood. The deer often come to eat their grain, the wolves to destroy their sheep, the bears to kill their hogs, the foxes to catch their poultry. Thus surrounding hostility immediately puts the gun into their hands; they watch these animals, they kill some, and thus by defending their property, they soon become professed hunters, this is the progress; once hunters, farewell to the plough. The chase renders them ferocious, gloomy, and unsociable; a hunter wants no neighbor, he rather hates them because he dreads the competition. In a little time their success in the woods makes them neglect their tillage. They trust to the natural fecundity of the earth, and therefore do little, carelessness in fencing often exposes what little they sow to destruction, they are not at home to watch, in order, therefore, to make up the deficiency, they go oftener to the woods. That new mode of life brings along with it a new set of manners which I cannot easily describe. These new manners, being grafted on the old stock, produce a strange sort of lawless profligacy, the impressions of which are indelible. The manners of the Indian natives are respectable compared with this European medley. Their wives and children live in sloth and inactivity; and having no proper pursuits, you may judge what education the latter receive. Their tender

minds have nothing else to contemplate but the example of their parents; like them they grow up a mongrel breed, half civilized, half savage, except nature stamps on them some constitutional propensities. That rich, that voluptuous sentiment is gone that struck them so forcibly; the possession of their freeholds no longer conveys to their minds the same pleasure and pride. To all these reasons you must add their lonely situation, and you cannot imagine what an effect on manners the great distances they live from each other has! Consider one of the last settlements in its first view; of what is it composed? Europeans who have not that sufficient share of knowledge they ought to have, in order to prosper, people who have suddenly passed from oppression, dread of government, and fear of laws, into the unlimited freedom of the woods. This sudden change must have a very great effect on most men, and on that class particularly. Eating of wild meat, whatever you may think, tends to alter their temper; though all the proof I can adduce is, that I have seen it, and having no place of worship to resort to, what little society this might afford is denied them. The Sunday meetings, exclusive of religious benefits, were the only social bonds that might have inspired them with some degree of emulation in neatness. Is it then surprising to see men thus situated, immersed in great and heavy labors, degenerate a little? It is rather a wonder the effect is not more diffusive. The Moravians and the Quakers are the only instances in exception to what I have advanced. The first never settle singly, it is a colony of the society which emigrates, they carry with them their forms, worship, rules, and decency, the others never begin so hard, they are always able to buy improvements, in which there is a great advantage, for by that time the country is recovered from its first barbarity. Thus our bad people are those who are half cultivators and half hunters, and the worst of them are those who have degenerated altogether into the hunting state. As old ploughmen and new men of the woods, as Europeans and new made Indians, they contract the vices of both; they adopt the moroseness and ferocity of a native, without his mildness or even his industry at home. If manners are not re-

finer, at least they are rendered simple and inoffensive by tilling the earth; all our wants are supplied by it; our time is divided between labor and rest and leaves none for the commission of great misdeeds. As hunters, it is divided between the toil of the chase, the idleness of repose, or the indulgence of inebriation. Hunting is but a licentious idle life, and if it does not always pervert good dispositions, yet, when it is united with bad luck, it leads to want, want stimulates that propensity to rapacity and injustice, too natural to needy men, which is the fatal gradation. After this explanation of the effects which follow by living in the woods, shall we yet vainly flatter ourselves with the hope of converting the Indians? We should rather begin with converting our back-settlers, and now if I dare mention the name of religion, its sweet accents would be lost in the immensity of these woods. Men thus placed are not fit either to receive or remember its mild instructions, they want temples and ministers, but as soon as men cease to remain at home and begin to lead an erratic life, let them be either tawny or white, they cease to be its disciples.

Thus have I faintly and imperfectly endeavored to trace our society from the sea to our woods; yet you must not imagine that every person who moves back acts upon the same principles or falls into the same degeneracy. Many families carry with them all their decency of conduct, purity of morals, and respect of religion, but these are scarce, the power of example is sometimes irresistible. Even among these back-settlers, their depravity is greater or less, according to what nation or province they belong. Were I to adduce proofs of this, I might be accused of partiality. If there happen to be some rich intervals, some fertile bottoms, in those remote districts, the people will there prefer tilling the land to hunting, and will attach themselves to it, but even on these fertile spots you may plainly perceive the inhabitants to acquire a great degree of rusticity and selfishness.

It is in consequence of this straggling situation and the astonishing power it has on manners that the back-settlers of both the Carolinas, Virginia, and many other parts have

been long a set of lawless people, it has been even dangerous to travel among them. Government can do nothing in so extensive a country; better it should wink at these irregularities than that it should use means inconsistent with its usual mildness. Time will efface those stains; in proportion as the great body of population approaches them they will reform and become polished and subordinate. Whatever has been said of the four New England provinces, no such degeneracy of manners has ever tarnished their annals; their back-settlers have been kept within the bounds of decency and government by means of wise laws and by the influence of religion. What a detestable idea such people<sup>1</sup> must have given to the natives of the Europeans! They trade with them; the worst of people are permitted to do that which none but persons of the best characters should be employed in. They get drunk with them and often defraud the Indians. Their avance, removed from the eyes of their superiors, knows no bounds, and aided by the little superiority of knowledge, these traders deceive them, and even sometimes shed blood. Hence those shocking violations, those sudden devastations which have so often stained our frontiers when hundreds of innocent people have been sacrificed for the crimes of a few. It was in consequence of such behavior that the Indians took the hatchet against the Virginians in 1774. Thus are our first steps trod, thus are our first trees felled, in general, by the most vicious of our people, and thus the path is opened for the arrival of a second and better class, the true American freeholders, the most respectable set of people in this part of the world: respectable for their industry, their happy independence, the great share of freedom they possess, the good regulation of their families, and for extending the trade and the dominion of our mother country.

Europe contains hardly any other distinctions but lords and tenants, this fair country alone is settled by freeholders, the possessors of the soil they cultivate, members of the government they obey, and the framers of their own laws, by means of their representa-

tives. This is a thought which you have taught me to cherish; our difference from Europe, far from diminishing, rather adds to our usefulness and consequence as men and subjects. Had our forefathers remained there, they would only have crowded it, and perhaps prolonged those convulsions which had shook it so long. Every industrious European who transports himself here may be compared to a sprout growing at the foot of a great tree; it enjoys and draws but a little portion of sap; wrench it from the parent roots, transplant it, and it will become a tree bearing fruit also. Colonists are therefore entitled to the consideration due to the most useful subjects, a hundred families, barely existing in some parts of Scotland, will here in six years cause an annual exportation of 10,000 bushels of wheat: 100 bushels being but a common quantity for an industrious family to sell, if they cultivate good land. It is here then that the idle may be employed, the useless become useful, and the poor become rich, but by riches I do not mean gold and silver, we have but little of those metals; I mean a better sort of wealth, cleared land, cattle, good houses, good clothes, and an increase of people to enjoy them.

There is no wonder that this country has so many charms and presents to Europeans so many temptations to remain in it. A traveler in Europe becomes a stranger as soon as he quits his own kingdom, but it is otherwise here. We know, properly speaking, no strangers, this is every person's country, the variety of our soils, situations, climates, governments, and produce, hath something which must please everybody. No sooner does an European arrive, no matter of what condition, than his eyes are opened upon the fair prospect, he hears his language spoken, he retraces many of his own country manners, he perpetually hears the names of families and towns with which he is acquainted; he sees happiness and prosperity in all places disseminated; he meets with hospitality, kindness, and plenty everywhere; he beholds hardly any poor; he seldom hears of punishments and executions; and he wonders at the elegance of our towns, those miracles of industry and freedom. He cannot admire enough our rural districts, our convenient roads, good taverns, and our many

<sup>1</sup> I.e., those described at the beginning of the paragraph.

accommodations, he involuntarily loves a country where everything is so lovely. When in England, he was a mere Englishman, here he stands on a larger portion of the globe, not less than its fourth part, and may see the productions of the north in iron and naval stores; the provisions of Ireland, the grain of Egypt, the indigo, the rice of China. He does not find, as in Europe, a crowded society where every place is over-stocked; he does not feel that perpetual collision of parties, that difficulty of beginning, that contention which oversets so many. There is room for everybody in America, has he any particular talent or industry? He exerts it in order to procure a livelihood, and it succeeds. Is he a merchant? The avenues of trade are infinite. Is he eminent in any respect? He will be employed and respected. Does he love a country life? Pleasant farms present themselves, he may purchase what he wants, and thereby become an American farmer. Is he a laborer, sober and industrious? He need not go many miles nor receive many informations before he will be hired, well fed at the table of his employer, and paid four or five times more than he can get in Europe. Does he want uncultivated lands? Thousands of acres present themselves, which he may purchase cheap. Whatever be his talents or inclinations, if they are moderate, he may satisfy them. I do not mean that every one who comes will grow rich in a little time, no, but he may procure an easy, decent maintenance by his industry. Instead of starving he will be fed; instead of being idle he will have employment; and these are riches enough for such men as come over here. The rich stay in Europe; it is only the middling and the poor that emigrate. Would you wish to travel in independent idleness from north to south, you will find easy access and the most cheerful reception at every house, society without ostentation, good cheer without pride, and every decent diversion which the country affords, with little expense. It is no wonder that the European who has lived here a few years is desirous to remain; Europe, with all its pomp, is not to be compared to this continent for men of middle stations or laborers.

A European, when he first arrives, seems limited in his intentions as well as in his views,

but he very suddenly alters his scale; two hundred miles formerly appeared a very great distance, it is now but a trifle, he no sooner breathes our air than he forms schemes and embarks in designs he never would have thought of in his own country. There the plenitude of society confines many useful ideas and often extinguishes the most laudable schemes which here ripen into maturity. Thus Europeans become Americans

But how is this accomplished in that crowd of low, indigent people who flock here every year from all parts of Europe? I will tell you, they no sooner arrive than they immediately feel the good effects of that plenty of provisions we possess, they fare on our best food, and they are kindly entertained, their talents, character, and peculiar industry are immediately inquired into, they find countrymen everywhere disseminated, let them come from whatever part of Europe. Let me select one as an epitome of the rest: he is hired, he goes to work, and works moderately, instead of being employed by a haughty person, he finds himself with his equal, placed at the substantial table of the farmer, or else at an inferior one as good, his wages are high, his bed is not like that bed of sorrow on which he used to lie; if he behaves with propriety and is faithful, he is caressed and becomes, as it were, a member of the family. He begins to feel the effects of a sort of resurrection, hitherto he had not lived, but simply vegetated, he now feels himself a man, because he is treated as such, the laws of his own country had overlooked him in his insignificance, the laws of this cover him with their mantle. Judge what an alteration there must arise in the mind and thoughts of this man, he begins to forget his former servitude and dependence, his heart involuntarily swells and glows; this first swell inspires him with those new thoughts which constitute an American. What love can he entertain for a country where his existence was a burden to him; if he is a generous, good man, the love of this new adoptive parent will sink deep into his heart. He looks around and sees many a prosperous person, who but a few years before was as poor as himself. This encourages him much; he begins to form some little scheme, the first, alas, he ever formed in

his life. If he is wise he thus spends two or three years, in which time he acquires knowledge, the use of tools, the modes of working the lands, felling trees, etc. This prepares the foundation of a good name, the most useful acquisition he can make. He is encouraged, he has gained friends; he is advised and directed, he feels bold, he purchases some land; he gives all the money he has brought over, as well as what he has earned, and trusts to the God of harvests for the discharge of the rest. His good name procures him credit. He is now possessed of the deed, conveying to him and his posterity the fee simple and absolute property of two hundred acres of land, situated on such a river. What an epoch in this man's life! He is become a freeholder, from perhaps a German boor—he is now an American, a Pennsylvanian, an English subject. He is naturalized, his name is enrolled with those of the other citizens of the province. Instead of being a vagrant, he has a place of residence, he is called the inhabitant of such a county, or of such a district, and for the first time in his life counts for something, for hitherto he has been a cipher. I only repeat what I have heard many say, and no wonder their hearts should glow and be agitated with a multitude of feelings not easy to describe. From nothing to start into being, from a servant to the rank of a master, from being the slave of some despotic prince, to become a free man, invested with lands, to which every municipal blessing is annexed! What a change indeed! It is in consequence of that change that he becomes an American. This great metamorphosis has a double effect; it extinguishes all his European prejudices, he forgets that mechanism of subordination, that servility of disposition which poverty had taught him; and sometimes he is apt to forget too much, often passing from one extreme to the other. If he is a good man, he forms schemes of future prosperity, he proposes to educate his children better than he has been educated himself; he thinks of future modes of conduct, feels an ardor to labor he never felt before. Pride steps in and leads him to everything that the laws do not forbid; he respects them; with a heartfelt gratitude he looks toward the east, toward that insular government from whose

wisdom all his new felicity is derived, and under whose wings and protection he now lives. These reflections constitute him the good man and the good subject. Ye poor Europeans, ye who sweat and work for the great—ye who are obliged to give so many sheaves to the church, so many to your lords, so many to your government, and have hardly any left for yourselves—ye who are held in less estimation than favorite hunters or useless lapdogs—ye who only breathe the air of nature because it cannot be withheld from you; it is here that ye can conceive the possibility of those feelings I have been describing, it is here the laws of naturalization invite every one to partake of our great labors and felicity, to till unrented, untaxed lands! Many, corrupted beyond the power of amendment, have brought with them all their vices, and disregarding the advantages held to them, have gone on in their former career of iniquity until they have been overtaken and punished by our laws. It is not every emigrant who succeeds; no, it is only the sober, the honest, and industrious, happy those to whom this transition has served as a powerful spur to labor, to prosperity, and to the good establishment of children, born in the days of their poverty; and who had no other portion to expect but the rags of their parents, had it not been for their happy emigration. Others again have been led astray by this enchanting scene, their new pride, instead of leading them to the fields, has kept them in idleness; the idea of possessing lands is all that satisfies them—though surrounded with fertility, they have mouldered away their time in inactivity, misinformed husbandry, and ineffectual endeavors. How much wiser, in general, the honest Germans than almost all other Europeans; they hire themselves to some of their wealthy landmen, and in that apprenticeship learn everything that is necessary. They attentively consider the prosperous industry of others, which imprints in their minds a strong desire of possessing the same advantages. This forcible idea never quits them, they launch forth, and by dint of sobriety, rigid parsimony, and the most persevering industry, they commonly succeed. Their astonishment at their first arrival from Germany is very great—it

is to them a dream, the contrast must be powerful indeed; they observe their countrymen flourishing in every place; they travel through whole counties where not a word of English is spoken, and in the names and the language of the people, they retrace Germany. They have been a useful acquisition to this continent, and to Pennsylvania in particular, to them it owes some share of its prosperity, to their mechanical knowledge and patience it owes the finest mills in all America, the best teams of horses, and many other advantages. The recollection of their former poverty and slavery never quits them as long as they live.

The Scotch and the Irish might have lived in their own country perhaps as poor, but enjoying more civil advantages, the effects of their new situation do not strike them so forcibly, nor has it so lasting an effect. From whence the difference arises I know not, but out of twelve families of emigrants of each country, generally seven Scotch will succeed, nine German, and four Irish. The Scotch are frugal and laborious, but their wives cannot work so hard as German women, who, on the contrary, vie with husbands and often share with them the most severe toils of the field, which they understand better. They have therefore nothing to struggle against but the common casualties of nature. The Irish do not prosper so well, they love to drink and to quarrel, they are litigious and soon take to the gun, which is the ruin of everything, they seem beside to labor under a greater degree of ignorance in husbandry than the others, perhaps it is that their industry had less scope and was less exercised at home. I have heard many relate how the land was parcelled out in that kingdom, their ancient conquest has been a great detriment to them by over-setting their landed property. The lands possessed by a few are leased down *ad infinitum*, and the occupiers often pay five guineas an acre. The poor are worse lodged there than anywhere else in Europe; their potatoes, which are easily raised, are perhaps an inducement to laziness, their wages are too low and their whiskey too cheap.

There is no tracing observations of this kind, without making at the same time very great allowances, as there are everywhere to

be found a great many exceptions. The Irish themselves, from different parts of that kingdom, are very different. It is difficult to account for this surprising locality, one would think on so small an island an Irishman must be an Irishman, yet it is not so, they are different in their aptitude to, and in their love of labor.

The Scotch on the contrary are all industrious and savings; they want nothing more than a field to exert themselves in, and they are commonly sure of succeeding. The only difficulty they labor under is that technical American knowledge which requires some time to obtain, it is not easy for those who seldom saw a tree to conceive how it is to be felled, cut up, and split into rails and posts.

As I am fond of seeing and talking of prosperous families, I intend to finish this letter by relating to you the history of an honest Scotch Hebridean who came here in 1774, which will show you in epitome what the Scotch can do, wherever they have room for the exertion of their industry. Whenever I hear of any new settlement, I pay it a visit once or twice a year, on purpose to observe the different steps each settler takes, the gradual improvements, the different tempers of each family, on which their prosperity in a great nature depends, their different modifications of industry, their ingenuity, and contrivance, for being all poor, their life requires sagacity and prudence. In the evening, I love to hear them tell their stories, they furnish me with new ideas, I sit still and listen to their ancient misfortunes, observing in many of them a strong degree of gratitude to God and the government. Many a well meant sermon have I preached to some of them. When I found laziness and inattention to prevail, who could refrain from wishing well to these new countrymen, after having undergone so many fatigues? Who could withhold good advice? What a happy change it must be to descend from the high, sterile, bleak lands of Scotland, where everything is barren and cold, to rest on some fertile farms in these middle provinces! Such a transition must have afforded the most pleasing satisfaction.

The following dialogue passed at an out-station where I lately paid a visit.

"Well, friend, how do you do now? I am come fifty odd miles on purpose to see you, how do you go on with your new cutting and slashing?"

"Very well, good Sir, we learn the use of the axe bravely, we shall make it out, we have a belly full of victuals every day, our cows run about, and come home full of milk, our hogs get fat of themselves in the woods. Oh, this is a good country! God bless the king and William Penn; we shall do very well by and by, if we keep our healths."

"Your log-house looks neat and light. Where did you get these shingles?"

"One of our neighbors is a New-England man, and he showed us how to split them out of chestnut-trees. Now for a barn, but all in good time, here are fine trees to build with."

"Who is to frame it? Sure you don't understand that work yet?"

"A countryman of ours, who has been in America these ten years, offers to wait for his money until the second crop is lodged in it."

"What did you give for your land?"

"Thirty-five shillings per acre, payable in seven years."

"How many acres have you got?"

"A hundred and fifty."

"That is enough to begin with, is not your land pretty hard to clear?"

"Yes, Sir, hard enough, but it would be harder still if it were ready cleared, for then we should have no timber, and I love the woods much; the land is nothing without them."

"Have not you found out any bees yet?"

"No, Sir, and if we had we should not know what to do with them."

"I will tell you by and by."

"You are very kind."

"Farewell, honest man, God prosper you, whenever you travel toward —, inquire for J. S. He will entertain you kindly, provided you bring him good tidings from your family and farm."

In this manner I often visit them and carefully examine their houses, their modes of ingenuity, their different ways, and make them all relate all they know, and describe all they feel. These are scenes which I believe you would willingly share with me. I well remem-

ber your philanthropic turn of mind. Is it not better to contemplate under these humble roofs the rudiments of future wealth and population, than to behold the accumulated bundles of litigious papers in the office of a lawyer? To examine how the world is gradually settled, how the howling swamp is converted into a pleasing meadow, the rough ridge into a fine field, and to hear the cheerful whistling, the rural song, where there was no sound heard before, save the yell of the savage, the screech of the owl, or the hissing of the snake? Here a European, fangued with luxury, riches, and pleasures, may find a sweet relaxation in a series of interesting scenes, as affecting as they are new England, which now contains so many domes, so many castles, was once like this, a place woody and marshy; its inhabitants, now the favorite nation for arts and commerce, were once painted like our neighbors. The country will flourish in its turn, and the same observations will be made which I have just delineated. Posterity will look back with avidity and pleasure, to trace, if possible, the era of this or that particular settlement.

Pray, what is the reason that the Scots are in general more religious, more faithful, more honest and industrious than the Irish? I do not mean to insinuate national reflections, God forbid! It ill becomes any man, and much less an American, but as I know men are nothing of themselves, and that they owe all their different modifications either to government or other local circumstances, there must be some powerful causes which constitute this great national difference.

Agreeable to the account which several Scotchmen have given me of the north of Britain, of the Orkneys, and the Hebrides Islands, they seem, on many accounts, to be unfit for the habitation of men; they appear to be calculated only for great sheep pastures. Who then can blame the inhabitants of these countries for transporting themselves hither? This great continent must in time absorb the poorest part of Europe; and this will happen in proportion as it becomes better known, and as war, taxation, oppression, and misery increase there. The Hebrides appear to be fit only for the residence of malefactors, and it would be much better to send felons there

than either to Virginia or Maryland. What a strange compliment has our mother country paid to two of the finest provinces in Americal England has entertained in that respect very mistaken ideas, what was intended as a punishment is become the good fortune of several; many of those who have been transported as felons are now rich and strangers to the stings of those wants that urged them to violations of the law; they are become industrious, exemplary, and useful citizens. The English government should purchase the most northern and barren of those islands, it should send over to us the honest, primitive Hebrideans, settle them here on good lands, as a reward for their virtue and ancient poverty, and replace them with a colony of her wicked sons. The severity of the climate, the inclemency of the seasons, the sterility of the soil, the tempestuousness of the sea would afflict and punish enough. Could there be found a spot better adapted to retaliate the injury it had received by their crimes? Some of those islands might be considered as the hell of Great Britain, where all evil spirits should be sent. Two essential ends would be answered by this simple operation. The good people, by emigration, would be rendered happier, the bad ones would be placed where they ought to be. In a few years the dread of being sent to that wintry region would have a much stronger effect than that of transportation. This is no place of punishment, were I a poor hopeless, breadless Englishman, and not restrained by the power of shame, I should be very thankful for the passage. It is of very little importance how and in what manner an indigent man arrives, for if he is but sober, honest, and industrious, he has nothing more to ask of heaven. Let him go to work, he will have opportunities enough to earn a comfortable support and even the means of procuring some land which ought to be the utmost wish of every person who has health and hands to work. I knew a man who came to this country, in the literal sense of the expression, stark naked, I think he was a French-

man and a sailor on board an English man-of-war. Being discontented, he had stripped himself and swam ashore, where, finding clothes and friends, he settled afterwards at Maraneck,<sup>1</sup> in the county of Chester, in the province of New York, he married and left a good farm to each of his sons. I knew another person who was but twelve years old when he was taken on the frontiers of Canada by the Indians, at his arrival at Albany he was purchased by a gentleman, who generously bound him apprentice to a tailor. He lived to the age of ninety and left behind him a fine estate and a numerous family, all well settled, many of them I am acquainted with.—Where is then the industrious European who ought to despair?

After a foreigner from any part of Europe is arrived and become a citizen, let him devoutly listen to the voice of our great parent, which says to him, "Welcome to my shores, distressed European; bless the hour in which thou didst see my verdant fields, my fair navigable rivers, and my green mountain!—If thou wilt work, I have bread for thee; if thou wilt be honest, sober, and industrious, I have greater rewards to confer on thee—ease and independence. I will give thee fields to feed and clothe thee, a comfortable fireside to sit by and tell thy children by what means thou hast prospered, and a decent bed to repose on. I shall endow thee, besides, with the immunities of a freeman. If thou wilt carefully educate thy children, teach them gratitude to God and reverence to that government, that philanthropic government which has collected here so many men and made them happy. I will also provide for thy progeny; and to every good man thus ought to be the most holy, the most powerful, the most earnest wish he can possibly form, as well as the most consolatory prospect when he dies. Go thou and work and till, thou shalt prosper, provided thou be just, grateful, and industrious."

c. 1770

1782

<sup>1</sup> Mamaroneck, in Westchester County



## 1706 ~ Benjamin Franklin ~ 1790

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was born in Boston and brought up "piously in a dissenting way." At the age of twelve he was apprenticed to his half-brother James, a printer of ability and initiative, who in 1721 started the fourth American newspaper, the *New England Courant*. During the next five years he read avidly in Locke, Shaftesbury, Defoe, Addison and Steele, Cotton Mather, Bunyan, and many other writers, cultivated the style of the *Spectator* in the *Silence Dogood* series of essays, and contributed anonymously to the *Courant*. In 1723, after a disagreement with his brother, he set out for Philadelphia, where he arrived with one Dutch dollar and a copper shilling in his pocket. An expert printer, he had no difficulty in finding work. He also found a patron in Governor Keith, who volunteered to set him up in business and in 1724 sent him to London to buy equipment. The promised letter of credit did not follow, however, and Franklin fell back upon his trade as his support during two instructive years in England. Back in Philadelphia in 1726, his unassisted rise was so rapid that by 1730 he was sole owner of the *Philadelphia Gazette*.

The next eighteen years he spent in building a fortune and a reputation. Landmarks in his career were the *Bury-Body* essays (1729), *Poor Richard's Almanac* (1732-1757), which sold widely and was much quoted for its homely, pungently expressed wisdom, and the *General Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (1741), the first magazine projected in the colonies. In the same years Franklin taught himself to read French, Spanish, Italian, and Latin, and aimed at "moral perfection" by listing thirteen principal virtues and pursuing each for four weeks at a time. In 1727 he started the Junto, a club which debated morals, politics, and natural philosophy, and in which he learned how to be tactfully persuasive. Meanwhile, as a public-spirited citizen, he helped establish in Philadelphia a circulating library, the American Philosophical Society, a city hospital, and the Academy for the Education of Youth, which became the University of Pennsylvania. He also served in the Assembly and was appointed to various offices, the most important being that of deputy postmaster of the colonies from 1753 to 1774, in which capacity he improved the service and made the post office a financial success, and familiarized himself with the country by visits of inspection which included every colony.

In his leisure he studied science, especially weather conditions, and invented the Franklin stove. By 1748 he was able to retire from business and devote himself to such pursuits as his important work on electricity, as a result of which he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. After six years, however, public affairs claimed him for the rest of his life.

In 1754 he secured the approval of a congress of delegates held at Albany for a union of the colonies, but his plan was rejected. From 1757 to 1762 he was in England as the agent of Pennsylvania on business arising from the French and Indian War. He had time, nevertheless, for travel, study, and experiment, time to know the great scientists, to correspond with Hume and Dr. Johnson, and to receive honorary degrees from St. Andrew's and from Oxford. His reputation as a diplomat and man of business increased, so that by 1770 he was again in London, representing not only Pennsylvania but Georgia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts also.

The decade 1770-1780, spent mainly in England and France, was the period of his most successful and enjoyable writing. To these years belong the earliest and best portion of his *Autobiography*, written in 1771; his humorous political satires, "An Edict by the King of Prussia" and "Rules by which a Great Empire may be Reduced to a Small One" (1773); his delightful "bagatelles," "The Ephemera" (1776) and "The Whistle" (1779), and his "Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout" (1780).

In 1775 he returned briefly to America to be a member of the Second Continental Congress, to sketch a Plan of Union, to reorganize the post office, and to help draft the Declaration of Independence. The next year he was sent to France as one of three commissioners to prevent France from joining with England against the colonies. Great was his popularity in that country, where he seemed a symbol in himself of the Age of Enlightenment. After concluding final treaties of commerce, he secured in 1778 the defensive alliance with France which was so very important in helping win the Revolution. Three years later Congress sent him with Adams and Jay to negotiate the treaty of peace with England, completed in 1783. His persuasion and tact were helpful at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, although several of his ideas were not adopted. His last public act before his death was to sign a memorial to Congress for the abolition of slavery.

The *Autobiography* rather definitely traces Franklin's literary and religious development. If, as is said, his first teacher was the witty, intelligent, and tart Madam Sarah Knight, he had a good induction to education. He was mainly, however, in the sense of owing little to formal schooling, self-educated, with the aid of sound counsel from his father and extensive and substantial reading. F. L. Mott and Chester Jorgenson list seventy authors, "to suggest only the more prominent," whom he seems to have read. In the formation of his style, he tells of his rewriting of *Spectator* essays, his experiments with Socratic argument, his friendly rivalry with James Collins and the Junto members in writing and debating, and his long-continued training as a newspaper editor, who, he said, must have "great easiness and command of wit and relating things clearly and intelligently and in a few good words."

Overfed as a boy with religious exercises in his Presbyterian home, he turned rather eagerly, upon discovering it, to the rational system of the deists, as found in the writings of Anthony Collins and Shaftesbury, and adopted it as his own. Later, becoming convinced that deism did not furnish a sufficient moral basis for conduct, he abandoned it as a religious system for a creed of his own described in his letter to Ezra Stiles (p. 230), which, reduced to the simplest elements of the Christian belief, was in effect close to Unitarianism. The deistic emphasis upon the rule of reason, however, remained dominant in his thinking throughout life; as did his idea of doing good to one's fellows, early implanted in his mind by Cotton Mather's "Essays to Do Good," as a more fitting form of worship than church attendance.

Politically and economically, Franklin adhered to the Whig doctrine founded upon natural rights and the social contract theory as set forth by Locke, supported by Newton's physical rationalism. As long as it was possible for him, he worked energetically for the idea of the British empire in its largest scope. His hopes frustrated by a short-sighted ministry and by the turn of events in America, he changed to the support of the Revolution and the erection of a strong and independent American nation. Though agrarian in feeling, he was no doctrinaire democrat, insisting as much upon obedience to the government as upon the rights of the governed. As an imperialist, he was, like Adam Smith, an advocate of free trade, and as a Whig he held to the ideas of laissez-faire and a government of limited powers.

Franklin was a New Englander, emancipated from narrowness by transfer to the freer atmosphere of the Middle Colonies and later to that of European courts. His point of view is that of the Yankee, expanded by the urbanity and liberalized philosophy, and the intellectual curiosity of eighteenth-century England and France. His dominant traits were shrewdness, thrift, common sense, and public spirit. He had a part in every intellectual and social movement of his age in America, from the introduction of street sweeping to spelling reform and antislavery agitation. The importance of these activities has naturally overshadowed his accomplishments as our first noteworthy familiar essayist, perhaps our best master of ironical yet genial political satire, and the author of one of the best pieces of autobiography in English. His wit is rarely bitter although it leans to a cynicism hardly surprising in a man who had seen so much of the world in so many strata of society. That world he accepted with intelligence, tranquillity, and common sense. As a writer, he was our first great realist.

The best editions of Franklin's works are *The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin* (10 vols., 1887-1888), edited by John Bigelow; and *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin, Collected and Edited with Life and Introduction* (10 vols., 1905-1907), by A. H. Smythe. The best edition of the *Autobiography* is by John Bigelow (3 vols., 1874). Excellent representative selections of his work are F. L. Mott and C. E. Jorgenson's *Benjamin Franklin* (1936), with useful introduction and

bibliography; and C. Van Doren's *Franklin and Edwards* (1920). P. L. Ford issued the *Franklin Bibliography* in 1889.

The following biographies are worth noting: James Parton, *The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin* (2 vols., 1864), J. B. McMaster, *Benjamin Franklin as a Man of Letters* (1887), E. E. Hale and E. E. Hale, Jr., *Franklin in France* (1887-1888), J. T. Morse, *Benjamin Franklin* (1889); S. G. Fisher, *The True Benjamin Franklin* (1899), P. L. Ford, *The Many-Sided Franklin* (1899); J. C. Oswald, *Benjamin Franklin, Printer* (1917), W. C. Bruce, *Benjamin Franklin Self-Revealed* (2 vols., 1917); Bernard Fay, *Franklin, the Apostle of Modern Times* (1929), A. H. Smythe, *Life of Franklin*, Vol. X, 141-510, of *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (1907), J. H. Smythe, Jr., *The Amazing Benjamin Franklin* (1929), Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (1938). The detailed article in *DAB* is by Carl L. Becker, and that in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, by Bernard Fay.

See also L. S. Livingston, *Franklin and His Press at Passy* (1914), A. W. Wetzel, *Benjamin Franklin as an Economist*, in *Johns Hopkins University Studies*, XIII (1895), J. M. Stoffer, *The Religion of Benjamin Franklin* (1925), M. R. Eiselen, *Franklin's Political Theories* (1928), C. E. Jorgenson, "Sidelights on Benjamin Franklin's Principles of Rhetoric," *Revue Anglo-Américaine*, 209-223 (February, 1934), V. W. Crane, "Certain Writings of Benjamin Franklin on the British Empire and the American Colonies," *Papers of the British Society*, XXVIII, 1-27, Part I (1934), B. Fay, "Les Débuts de Franklin en France," *Revue de Paris*, 577-605 (February, 1931), L. M. MacLaurin, *Franklin's Vocabulary* (1928), W. G. Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (1927), Chaps I and II, S. P. Sherman, "Franklin and the Age of Enlightenment," in *Americans* (1922)

### From SILENCE DOGOOD PAPERS

NO VII<sup>1</sup>

#### [Satire on Funeral Elegies]

Franklin's youthful satire on the absurdities of the contemporary New England funeral elegy was provoked by a very poor poem by a Dr Herwick, or Herrick, probably of Beverly, near Salem. An extended word-combat followed in the columns of his brother's paper, the *Courant*. Franklin's spelling, punctuation, and italics have been followed in this essay.

Give me the Muse, whose generous Force,  
Impatient to the Reins,  
Pursues an unattempted Course,  
Breaks all the Criticks Iron Chains

Watts.

To the Author of the *New England Courant*  
Sir,

It has been the Complaint of many Ingenious Foreigners, who have travel'd amongst us, that good Poetry is not to be expected in New England. I am apt to Fancy, the Reason

is, not because our Countrymen are altogether void of a Poetical Genius, nor yet because we have not those Advantages of Education which other Countries have, but purely because we do not afford that Praise and Encouragement which is merited, when anything extraordinary of this Kind is produc'd among us. Upon which Consideration I have determined, when I meet with a Good Piece of  
10 *New England* Poetry, to give it a suitable Encomium, and thereby endeavor to discover to the World some of its Beautys, in order to encourage the Authors to go on, and bless the World with more, and more Excellent Productions.

There has lately appear'd among us a most Excellent Piece of Poetry, entituled, *An Elegy upon the much Lamented Death of Mrs. Mehutebell Kitel, Wife of Mr. John Kitel, of*  
20 *Salem, Etc.*<sup>1</sup> It may justly be said in its praise, without Flattery to the Author, that it is the most *Extraordinary* Piece that was ever wrote in *New England*. The Language is so soft and easy, the Expression so moving and pathetick,

<sup>1</sup> From the *New England Courant* for the week June 18 to June 25, 1722

<sup>2</sup> Probably this was a broadside elegy, not preserved, perhaps written by her family physician.

but above all, the Verse and Numbers<sup>1</sup> so Charming and Natural, that it is almost beyond comparison.

The Muse disdains  
Those Links and Chains,  
Measures and Rules of Vulgar Strains,  
And o'er the Laws of Harmony a Sovereign  
queen she reigns.

I find no English Author, Ancient or Modern, whose Elegies may be compar'd with this, in respect to the Elegance of Style, or Smoothness of Rhyme; and for the affecting Part, I will leave your Readers to judge, if ever they read any Lines, that would sooner make them *draw their Breath* and Sigh, if not shed Tears, than these following.

Come let us mourn, for we have lost a  
Wife, a Daughter, and a Sister,  
Who has lately taken Flight, and  
greatly we have must her.

In another place,  
Some little Time before she yielded up her  
Breath,  
She said, I ne'er shall hear one Sermon more on  
Earth.  
She kist her Husband some little time before  
she expt'd,  
Then leaned her Head the pillow on, just out of  
Breath and tū'd.

But the Threefold Appellation in the first Line

—a Wife, a Daughter, and a Sister,  
must not pause unobserved. That line in the celebrated Watts,

GUNSTON<sup>2</sup> the Just, the Generous, and the  
Young,

is nothing Comparable to it. The latter only mentions three Qualifications of one Person who was deceased, which therefore could raise Grief and Compassion but for One. Whereas the former, (*our most excellent Poet*) gives his Reader a Sort of an Idea of the Death of Three Persons, viz

—a Wife, a Daughter, and a Sister,  
which is Three Times as great a Loss as the Death of One, and consequently must raise

<sup>1</sup> meter    <sup>2</sup> Isaac Watts wrote a poem in memory of an unidentified "honored friend," Thomas Gunston.

Three Times as much Grief and Compassion in the Reader.

I should be very much straitened<sup>1</sup> for Room, if I should attempt to discover even half the Excellencies of this Elegy which are obvious to me. Yet I cannot omit one Observation, which is, that the Author has (to his Honour) invented a new Species of Poetry, which wants a Name, and was never before known His muse scorns to be confin'd to the old Measures and Limits, or to observe the dull Rules of Crinicks:

Nor Rapin gives her Rules to fly, nor Purcell  
Notes to Sing

Watts.

Now 'tis Pity that such an Excellent Piece should not be dignify'd with a particular Name, and seeing it cannot justly be called, either *Epic*, *Sapphic*, *Lyric*, or *Pindaric*, nor any other Name yet invented, I presume it may, (in Honour and Remembrance of the Dead) be called the *KITELIC*. Thus much in the Praise of *Kitelic Poetry*

It is certain that those Elegies which are of our own Growth, (and our Soil seldom produces any other sort of Poetry) are by far the greatest part, wretchedly Dull and Ridiculous Now since it is imagined by many, that our Poets are honest, well-meaning Fellows, who do their best, and that if they had but some Instructions how to govern Fancy with Judgment, they would make indifferent good Elegies, I shall here subjoin a Receipt for that purpose, which was left me as a Legacy, (among other valuable Rarities) by my Reverend Husband It is as follows,

A receipt to make a New-England Funeral Elegy

For the Title of your Elegy, of these you may have enough ready made to your Hands, but if you should chuse to make it your self, you must be sure not to omit the words *Aetatis Suae*,<sup>2</sup> which will Beautify it exceedingly

For the subject of your Elegy Take one of your neighbors who has lately departed this Life, it is no great matter at what Age the Party dy'd, but it will be best if he went away suddenly being Kill'd, Drown'd, or Frose to Death.

Having chose the Person, take all his Virtues,

<sup>1</sup> cramped    <sup>2</sup> [in the year] of his age

*Excellencies, &c. and if he have not enough, you may borrow some to make up a sufficient Quantity. To these add his last Words, dying Expressions &c. if they are to be had, mix all these together, and be sure you strain them well. Then season all with a Handful or two of Melancholly Expressions, such as, Dreadful, Deadly, cruel cold Death, unhappy Fate, weeping Eyes, &c. Have mixed all these Ingredients well, put them into the empty Scull of some young Harvard, (but in Case you have not a One at Hand, you may use your own,) there let them Ferment for the Space of a Fort-night, and by that Time they will be incorporated into a Body, which take out, and having prepared a sufficient Quantity of double Rhimes, such as Power, Flower, Quiver, Shiver; Grieve us, Leave us, tell you, excel you, Expeditions, Physicians, Fatigue hum, Intrigue hum, &c you must spread all upon Paper, and if you can procure a Scrap of Linn to put at the End, it will garnish it mightily, then having affixed your Name at the Bottom, with a Moestus Compositus<sup>1</sup> you will have an Excellent Elegy*

N B This Receipt will serve when a Female is the Subject of your Elegy, provided you borrow a greater quantity of Virtues and Excellencies, &c.

SIR,  
Your Servant  
Silence Dogood

1722

A WITCH TRIAL<sup>2</sup>

Franklin's skill in converting a news item into satire appears in his treatment of a contemporary episode in the vicinity of Philadelphia after his removal thither. Belief in witchcraft still prevailed in the Middle Colonies as it had in New England. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1731, describes a trial for witchcraft at Burlington "in Pennsylvania" in which the test of Bible and scales was used.

SATURDAY last, at Mount Holly, about 8 miles from this place,<sup>3</sup> near 300 people were gathered together to see an experiment or two tried on some persons accused of witchcraft. It seems the accused had been charged

with making their neighbors' sheep dance in an uncommon manner, and with causing hogs to speak and sing psalms, etc., to the great terror and amazement of the king's good and peaceable subjects in this province; and the accusers, being very positive that if the accused were weighed in scales against a Bible, the Bible would prove too heavy for them, or that, if they were bound and put into the river they would swim, the said accused, desirous to make innocence appear, voluntarily offered to undergo the said trials if two of the most violent of their accusers would be tried with them. Accordingly the time and place was agreed on and advertised about the country. The accusers were one man and woman, and the accused the same. The parties being met and the people got together, a grand consultation was held, before they proceeded to trial, in which it was agreed to use the scales first; and a committee of men were appointed to search the men, and a committee of women to search the women, to see if they had any thing of weight about them, particularly pins. After a scrutiny was over a huge great Bible belonging to the justice of the place was provided, and a lane through the populace was made from the justice's house to the scales, which were fixed on a gallows erected for that purpose opposite to the house, that the justice's wife and the rest of the ladies might see the trial without coming amongst the mob, and after the manner of Moorfields a large ring was also made. Then came out of the house a grave, tall man, carrying the Holy Writ before the supposed wizard, etc (as solemnly as the sword-bearer of London before the Lord Mayor). The wizard was first put in the scale, and over him was read a chapter out of the Books of Moses, and then the Bible was put in the other scale, which, (being kept down before) was immediately let go; but, to the great surprise of the spectators, flesh and bones came down plump, and outweighed that great good Book by abundance. After the same manner the others were served, and their lumps of mortality severally were too heavy for Moses and all the Prophets and Apostles. This being over, the accusers and the rest of the mob, not satisfied with this experiment, would have the trial by water

<sup>1</sup> "mourning, he wrote" <sup>2</sup> From the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 20, 1730 <sup>3</sup> Burlington, New Jersey, about twenty miles from Philadelphia

Accordingly a most solemn procession was made to the mill pond, where both accused and accusers being stripped (saving only to the women their shifts) were bound hand and foot and severally placed in the water, lengthways, from the side of a barge or flat, having for security only a rope about the middle of each, which was held by some in the flat. The accused man, being thin and spare, with some difficulty began to sink at last, but the rest, every one of them, swam very light upon the water. A sailor in the flat jumped out upon the back of the man accused, thinking to drive him down to the bottom, but the person bound, without any help, came up some time before the other. The woman accuser being told that she did not sink, would be ducked a second time, when she swam again as light as before. Upon which she declared that she believed the accused had bewitched her to make her so light, and that she would be ducked again a hundred times but she would duck the Devil out of her. The accused man, being surprised at his own swimming, was not so confident of his innocence as before, but said, "If I am a witch, it is more than I know." The more daring part of the spectators were of opinion that any person so bound and placed in the water (unless they were mere skin and bones) would swim, till their breath was gone, and their lungs filled with water. But it being the general belief of the populace that the women's shifts and the garters with which they were bound helped to support them, it is said they are to be tried again the next warm weather, naked.

1730

#### From POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC

These proverbs were assembled with a number of others in *The Way to Wealth*, 1757. Some of them are original with Franklin, some are common proverbs, many others are old proverbs retouched and given a fresh turn of phrase by Franklin. They are lacking in idealism but represent the common sense which was so much the basis of all Franklin's thought and conduct.

A facsimile reproduction of *Poor Richard's Almanac* for the year 1753 is to be found in the Mott-Jorgenson *Franklin*, in the American Writers series, pp. 225-260.

SLOTH, like Rust, consumes faster than Labor wears; while the used Key is always bright.

But dost thou love Life, then do not squander Time, for that's the stuff Life is made of.

There will be sleeping enough in the Grave.

He that riseth late must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his Business at Night.

10 Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee.

Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy, and wise

There are no Gains without Pains, then Help Hands, for I have no Lands.

He that hath a Trade hath an Estate, and he that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honor.

20 At the working Man's House Hunger looks in, but dares not enter.

Diligence is the Mother of Good-luck, and God gives all Things to Industry.

Then plough deep, while Sluggards sleep, and you shall have Corn to sell and to keep.

One Today is worth two Tomorrows.

Have you somewhat to do Tomorrow, do it Today.

30 Be ashamed to catch yourself idle

The Cat in Gloves catches no Mice.

By Diligence and Patience the Mouse ate in two the Cable

Employ thy Time well, if thou meanest to gain Leisure, and, since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour.

A Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two Things

40 Many without Labor, would live by their Wits only, but they break for want of Stock.

Little Strokes fell great Oaks.

The diligent Spinner has a large Shift; and now I have a Sheep and a Cow, every-body bids me good Morrow.

I never saw an oft-removed Tree,  
Nor yet an oft-removed Family,  
That throve so well as those that settled be.

Three Removes is as bad as a Fire.

Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee.

He that by the Plough would thrive,  
Himself must either hold or drive.

The Eye of a Master will do more Work than  
both his Hands.

In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved,  
not by Faith, but by the Want of it

A fat Kitchen makes a lean Will

Many Estates are spent in the Getting,  
Since Women for Tea forsook Spinning and  
Knutting,

And Men for Punch forsook Hewing and  
Splitting.

Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,  
Make the Wealth small and the Wants  
great.

What maintains one Vice, would bring up two  
Children

Beware of little Expenses, A small Leak will  
sink a great Ship

Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them

At a great Pennyworth pause a while.

Silks and Satins, Scarlet and Velvets, put out  
the Kirchen Fire

A Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a  
Gentleman on his Knees

Pride is as loud a Beggar as Want, and a great  
deal more saucy

Great Estates may venture more,  
But little Boats should keep near Shore

What is a Butterfly? At best  
He's but a Caterpillar drest,  
The gaudy Pop's his Picture just.

The second Vice is Lying, the first is running  
in Debt.

'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand up-  
right.

Those have a short Lent, who owe Money to  
be paid at Easter.

Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will  
learn in no other, and scarce in that.

1732-1757

1757

# From the AUTOBIOGRAPHY

## [Reasons for Writing]

Twyford, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771

DEAR SON, I have ever had a pleasure in ob-  
taining any little anecdotes of my ancestors.  
You may remember the inquiries I made  
among the remains of my relations when you  
were with me in England, and the journey I  
undertook for that purpose Now imagining  
it may be equally agreeable to you to know  
the circumstances of *my* life, many of which  
you are yet unacquainted with, and expecting  
a week's uninterrupted leisure in my present  
country retirement, I sit down to write them  
for you To which I have besides some other  
inducements Having emerged from the  
poverty and obscurity in which I was born  
and bred, to a state of affluence and some  
degree of reputation in the world, and having  
gone so far through life with a considerable  
share of felicity, the conducting means I made  
use of, which with the blessing of God so well  
succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as  
they may find some of them suitable to their  
own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated

That felicity, when I reflected on it, has in-  
duced me sometimes to say that were it  
offered to my choice, I should have no ob-  
jection to a repetition of the same life from its  
beginning, only asking the advantages authors  
have in a second edition to correct some faults  
of the first So would I, if I might, besides  
correcting the faults, change some sinister ac-  
cidents and events of it for others more favor-  
able. But though this were denied, I should  
still accept the offer However, since such a  
repetition is not to be expected, the next thing  
most like living one's life over again seems to  
be a *recollection* of that life, and to make that  
recollection as durable as possible, the putting  
it down in writing

Hereby, too, I shall indulge the inclination  
so natural in old men, to be talking of them-  
selves and their own past actions, and I shall  
indulge it without being troublesome to others,  
who, through respect to age, might think  
themselves obliged to give me a hearing, since  
this may be read or not as any one pleases  
And, lastly (I may as well confess it, since my



denial of it will be believed by nobody), perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own vanity. Indeed, I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory words, *Without vanity I may say, &c.*, but some vain thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of it themselves; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others that are within its sphere of action; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be quite absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life. . . .

### [*Early Reading and Self-Cultivation*]

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections*, they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, forty or fifty in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. *Plutarch's Lives* there was, in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of Defoe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *Essays to Do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters, to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was

persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces, my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing two occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthlake, with his two daughters, the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of Teach (or Blackbeard), the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub Street ballad style, and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event, being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity, but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one, but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction

that is necessary to bring it into practice, and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and perhaps enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinburgh.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words, and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing, observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I owed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method, and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With that view I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before,

in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse, and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them, but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading was at night, after work, or before it began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which indeed I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford the time to practice it.

When about sixteen years of age I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet, I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh caused an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boil-

ing potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and dispatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water, had the rest of the time till their return for study, in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of Arithmetic, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Sturmy's books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain, but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke *On Human Understanding* and the *Art of Thinking* by Messrs. du Port Royal.

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic method, and soon after I procured Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it, therefore I took a delight in it, practiced it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowl-

edge, into concessions the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence, never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or I apprehend a thing to be so or so; it appears to me, or I should think it so or so, for such and such reasons, or I imagine it to be so, or it is so if I am not mistaken. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting, and as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For if you would inform, a positive, dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fixed in your present opinions, modest, sensible men who do not love disputation will probably leave you undisturbed in possession of your error. And by such a manner you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire.

### [Journey to Philadelphia]

I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer; and I was rather inclined to leave Boston when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and from the arbitrary proceedings of the

Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes; and further, that my indiscreet disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist. I determined on the point, but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his who had got a naughty girl with child, whose friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear or come away publicly. So I sold some of my books to raise a little money, was taken on board privately, and as we had a fair wind, in three days I found myself in New York, near three hundred miles from home, a boy of but seventeen, without the least recommendation to, or knowledge of, any person in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

My inclinations for the sea were by this time worn out, or I might now have gratified them. But, having a trade, and supposing myself a pretty good workman, I offered my service to the printer in the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but removed from thence upon the quarrel of George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and help enough already, but says he, "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death, if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was a hundred miles further; I set out, however, in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill, and drove us upon Long Island. In our way, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I

would dry for him. It proved to be my old favorite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, with copper cuts, a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mixed narration and dialogue, a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting parts finds himself, as it were, brought into the company and present at the discourse. Defoe in his *Crusoe*, his *Moll Flanders*, *Religious Courtship*, *Family Instructor*, and other pieces, has imitated it with success, and Richardson has done the same in his *Pamela*, etc.

When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor, and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hallooed to us, as we did to them, but the wind was so high, and the surf so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs, and hallooed that they should fetch us, but they either did not understand us or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate, and, in the meantime, the boatman and I concluded to sleep, if we could, and so crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet; and the spray beating over the head of our boat, leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest; but the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, the water we sailed on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to bed, but having read somewhere that cold water drunk plentifully was good for a fever, I followed the prescription, sweat plentifully most of the night, my fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the

ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty mules to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia

It rained very hard all the day; I was thoroughly soaked, and by noon a good deal tired, so I stopped at a poor inn, where I stayed all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions asked me, I was suspected to be some runaway servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continued as long as he lived. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travesty the Bible in doggerel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published, but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reached Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and asked her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot traveling, I accepted the invitation. She, understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat

came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we rowed all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were, so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arrived there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market Street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working-dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey, my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing, and want of rest, I was very hungry, and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it on account of my rowing, but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about, till, near the market-house, I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second Street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So, not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave

me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father, when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down 10 Chestnut Street, and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market Street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the 20 street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers, near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round a while and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me 30 This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

### *[Employed as Printer in Philadelphia]*

Walking down again toward the river, and looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I liked, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were 40 then near the sign of the Three Mariners "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house, if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better" He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water Street. Here I got a dinner; and while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance that I might be some runaway.

After dinner, my sleepiness returned, and

being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing and slept till six in the evening, was called to supper, went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, traveling on horseback, had got to Philadel- 10 phia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one, but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer, and when we found him, "Neighbor," says Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business, perhaps you may want such a one" He asked me a few questions, put a composing stick in my hand to see how I worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do, and taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's people that had a good will for him, entered into a con- 30 versation on his present undertaking and prospects, while Bradford, not discovering<sup>1</sup> that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business into his own hands, drew him on by artful questions, and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what interests he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one of them was a crafty old sophister, and the other a mere novice Brad- 40 ford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was.

Keimer's printing-house, I found, consisted of an old shattered press, and one small, worn-out font of English, which he was then using himself, composing an Elegy on Aquila Rose, before mentioned, an ingenious young man 50 of excellent character, much respected in the

<sup>1</sup> revealing

town, clerk of the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to write them, for his manner was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. So there being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the *Elegy* likely to require all the letter,<sup>1</sup> no one could help him. I endeavored to put his press (which he had not yet used, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be worked with; and promising to come and print off his *Elegy* as soon as he should have got it ready, I returned to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dined. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the *Elegy*. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was very illiterate; and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor knowing nothing of presswork. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations. At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion, was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I worked with him. He had a house indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me; but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's before mentioned, who was the owner of his house; and my chest and clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town that were lovers of reading, with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly; and gaining money by my industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could, and not desiring that any there should know where I resided except my friend Collins, who was in my secret, and kept it when I wrote to him. At length, an incident happened that sent me back again much sooner

than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, heard there of me, and wrote me a letter mentioning the concern of my friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good will to me, and that everything would be accommodated to my mind if I would return, to which he exhorted me very earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter, thanked him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston fully and in such a light as to convince him I was not so wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and showed him the letter. The governor read it, and seemed surprised when he was told my age. He said I appeared a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged, the printers of Philadelphia were wretched ones, and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed, for his part, he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This my brother-in-law afterwards told me in Boston, but I knew as yet nothing of it, when, one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman (which proved to be Colonel French of Newcastle), finely dressed, come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him, but the governor inquired for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unused to made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blamed me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent *Madeira*. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared like a pig poisoned. I went, however, with the governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner

<sup>1</sup> type

of Third Street, and over the Madeira he proposed my setting up my business, laid before me the probabilities of success, and both he and Colonel French assured me I should have their interest and influence in procuring the public business of both governments. On my doubting whether my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would state the advantages, and he did not doubt of prevailing with him. So it was concluded I should return to Boston in the first vessel, with the governor's letter recommending me to my father. In the meantime the intention was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual, the governor sending for me now and then to dine with him, a very great honor I thought it, and conversing with me in the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

### *[Trip to Boston and Back]*

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offered for Boston. I took leave of Keimer as going to see my friends. The governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia as a thing that must make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak; we had a blustering time at sea, and were obliged to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arrived safe, however, at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me, for my brother Holmes was not yet returned and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surprised the family; all were, however, very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with near five pounds sterling in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and

how I liked it. I praised it much, and the happy life I led in it, expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and one of them asking what kind of money we had there, I produced a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of raree show they had not been used to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an opportunity of letting them see my watch, and, lastly (my brother still grim and sullen), I gave them a piece of eight to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extremely, for, when my mother some time after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wishes to see us on good terms together and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

My father received the governor's letter with some apparent surprise, but said little of it to me for some days, when Captain Holmes returning he showed it to him, asked him if he knew Keith, and what kind of man he was; adding his opinion that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a boy up in business who wanted yet three years of being at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favor of the project, but my father was clear in the impropriety of it, and at last gave a flat denial to it. Then he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, but declining to assist me as yet in setting up, I being, in his opinion, too young to be trusted with the management of a business so important, and for which the preparation must be so expensive.

My friend and companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post office, pleased with the account I gave him of my new country, determined to go thither also, and, while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection of mathematics and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleased that I had been able to obtain so advantageous a



character from a person of such note where I had resided, and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time; therefore, seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advised me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavor to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libelling, to which he thought I had too much inclination, telling me, that by steady industry and a prudent parsimony I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up; and that, if I came near the matter, he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York, now with their approbation and their blessing

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island, I visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always loved me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pennsylvania, about 35 pounds currency, desired I would receive it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to remit it in. Accordingly he gave me an order. Thus afterwards occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness. At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible matron-like Quaker woman with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services which unpressed her, I suppose, with a degree of good will towards me. Therefore when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appeared to encourage, she took me aside and said, "Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou hast no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to, depend upon it, those are very bad women. I can see it in all their actions, and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger: they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them."

As I seemed at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York, they told me where they lived and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it. And it was well I did, for the next day the Captain missed a silver spoon and some other things that had been taken out of his cabin, and knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punished. So though we had escaped a sunken rock which we scraped upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together, but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as an industrious lad, was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But during my absence he had acquired a habit of sitting with brandy; and I found by his own account and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved very oddly. He had gamed too and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which proved extremely inconvenient to me. The then Governor of New York, Burnet, son of Bishop Burnet, hearing from the Captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desired he would bring me to see him. I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This

was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me, which to a poor boy like me was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting house; but whether they discovered his drugging by his breath, or by his behavior, though he had some recommendations, he met with 10 no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's, he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distressed to think what I should do, in case of being called on to remit it. His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarreled, for 20 when a little intoxicated he was very fractious. Once in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you please." The others said, "Let us row, what signifies it?" But my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw 30 me overboard, and coming along stepping on the thwarts towards me, when he came up and struck at me I clapt my hand under his crotch, and rising pitched him head foremost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him, but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pulled her out of his reach. And ever when he drew near the boat, we asked if he would row, striking 40 a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row; however, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in, and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchanged a civil word afterwards; and a West India captain who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. 50 He left me then, promising to remit me the

first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt. But I never heard of him after.

### [Great Expectations]

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life. And this affair showed that my father was not much out in his judgment when he supposed me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent. There was great difference in persons, and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able, I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on the governor, probably some friend that knew him better would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterwards 30 heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing house, amounting by my computation to about £100 sterling. He liked it, but asked me if my being on the spot in England to choose the types and see that everything was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," says he, "get yourself ready to go with *Annus*," which was the annual ship, and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before *Annus* sailed; so I continued working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from

me; and in daily apprehensions of being called upon by Vernon, which however did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food; and on this occasion, I considered with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and when this came hot out of the frying pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs. Then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do.

1771

1791

### [*Why Franklin Seldom Went to Church Services*]

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and though some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as the *eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation*, etc., appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and governed it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal, and that all crime will be punished and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, though with dif-

ferent degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mixed with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, served principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induced me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increased in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Though I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations, and I was now and then prevailed on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study, but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagined, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confined himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, viz. 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the public worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but as they were not the kind of good things that I

expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before composed a little liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz, in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*. I returned to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blamable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it, my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them

[*The Project of Attaining Moral Perfection*]

It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection I wished to live without committing any fault at any time, I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another, habit took the advantage of attention, inclination was sometimes too strong for reason I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous was not sufficient to prevent our slipping, and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas

annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts were—

1. TEMPERANCE

Eat not to dulness, drink not to elevation

2. SILENCE.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself, avoid trifling conversation.

3 ORDER.

Let all your things have their places, let each part of your business have its time

4. RESOLUTION.

Resolve to perform what you ought, perform without fail what you resolve.

5 FRUGALITY.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself, i.e, waste nothing.

6 INDUSTRY

Lose no time; be always employed in something useful, cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY

Use no hurtful deceit, think innocently and justly; and if you speak, speak accordingly

8 JUSTICE.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION.

Avoid extremes, forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve

10. CLEANLINESS.

Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11 TRANQUILLITY

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone through the thirteen; and as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. *Temperance* first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, *Silence* would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. Thus and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues, *Frugality* and *Industry* freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of *Sincerity* and *Justice*, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

## Form of the Pages

TEMPERANCE							
EAT NOT TO DULNESS, DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
T							
S	*	*		*		*	
O	**	*	*		*	*	*
R			*			*	
F		*			*		
I			*				
S							
J							
M							
C							
T							
C							
H							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offense against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*—

"Here will I hold. If there's a power above us  
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud  
Through all her works), He must delight in  
virtue,  
And that which He delights in must be  
happy."

Another from Cicero,

"O vitae Philosophia dux! O virtutum inda-  
gatrix expultrixque vitorum! Unus dies, bene  
et ex praeceptis tuis actus, peccanti immor- 10  
talitati est antependendus." <sup>1</sup>

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon,  
speaking of wisdom or virtue —

"Length of days is in her right hand, and  
in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways  
are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are  
peace" iii. 16, 17.

And concerning God to be the fountain of  
wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to  
solicit his assistance for obtaining it, to this 20  
end I formed the following little prayer, which  
was prefixed to my tables of examination, for  
daily use.

"O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father!  
merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom  
which discovers my truest interest Strengthen  
my resolutions to perform what that wisdom  
dictates Accept my kind offices to thy other  
children as the only return in my power for thy  
continual favors to me."

I used also sometimes a little prayer which  
I took from Thomson's Poems, viz. —

"Father of light and life, thou Good Supremel  
O teach me what is good, teach me Thyself!  
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,  
From every low pursuit, and fill my soul  
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue  
pure,  
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!"

The precept of *Order* requiring that every  
part of my business should have its allotted time,  
one page in my little book contained the fol-  
lowing scheme of employment for the twenty  
four hours of a natural day

<sup>1</sup> O Philosophy, guide of life! O investigator and ex-  
peller of crimes! A single day, lived well and in accord-  
ance with your precepts, is to be preferred to sinful  
immortality

THE MORNING

Question What  
good shall I do this  
day?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| { | 5 | Rise, wash, and ad-<br>dress <i>powerful Good-</i><br><i>ness!</i> Contrive day's |
| { | 6 | business, and take the<br>resolution of the day,                                  |
| { | 7 | prosecute the present<br>study, and breakfast.                                    |

- |   |    |       |
|---|----|-------|
| { | 8  |       |
| { | 9  | Work. |
| { | 10 |       |
| { | 11 |       |

NOON.

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| { | 12 | Read, or overlook my<br>accounts, and dine |
| { | 1  |  |

- |   |   |      |
|---|---|------|
| { | 2 |      |
| { | 3 | Work |
| { | 4 |      |
| { | 5 |      |

EVENING

Question What  
good have I done to-  
day?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| { | 6 | Put things in their<br>places Supper            |
| { | 7 | Music or diversion, or<br>conversation Examina- |
| { | 8 | tion of the day                                 |
| { | 9 |   |

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| { | 10 |  |
| { | 11 |  |
| { | 12 |  |

NIGHT

- |   |   |       |
|---|---|-------|
| { | 1 | Sleep |
| { | 2 |       |
| { | 3 |       |
| { | 4 |       |

I entered upon the execution of this plan  
for self-examination, and continued it with oc-  
casional intermissions for some time. I was  
surprised to find myself so much fuller of  
faults than I had imagined, but I had the satis-  
faction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the  
trouble of renewing now and then my little  
book, which, by scraping out the marks on  
the paper of old faults to make room for new  
ones in a new course, became full of holes, I  
transferred my tables and precepts to the  
ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on  
which the lines were drawn with red ink that  
made a durable stain, and on those lines I  
marked my faults with a black-lead pencil,  
which marks I could easily wipe out with a  
wet sponge. After a while I went through one  
course only in a year, and afterward only one  
in several years, till at length I omitted them  
entirely, being employed in voyages and busi-  
ness abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that  
interfered; but I always carried my little book  
with me.

My scheme of *ORDER* gave me the most

trouble, and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master who must mix with the world and often receive people of business at their own hours. Order, too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore cost me so much painful attention and my faults vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses that I was almost ready to give up the attempt and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbor, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel, he turned while the smith pressed the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fauaging. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on and at length would take his ax as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on, we shall have it bright by and by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I think I like a speckled ax best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many who, having, for want of some such means as I employed, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled ax was best*"; for something that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old

and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavor, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it, as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence, but if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution, to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him, and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit.

1784

1791

### [Public-spirited Projects]

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia (a very beneficent design, which has been ascribed to me, but was originally his) for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavoring to procure subscriptions

for it, but the proposal being a novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met with small success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concerned in it. "For," says he, "I am often asked by those to whom I propose subscribing, 'Have you consulted Franklin upon this business? And what does he think of it?' And when I tell them that I have not (supposing it rather out of your line), they do not subscribe, but say they will consider of it." I enquired into the nature and probable utility of his scheme, and receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscribed to it myself, but engaged heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation, I endeavored to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases but which he had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous; but, beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly, and therefore proposed to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at first relish the project, they objected that it could only be serviceable to the city, and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it, and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approved of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I formed my plan, and, asking leave to bring in a bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one, viz., "And be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, and shall have raised by their con-

*tributions a capital stock of — value* (the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the accommodating of the sick poor in the said hospital, free of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines), *and shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the speaker of the Assembly for the time being*, that then, it shall and may be lawful for the said speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same."

This condition carried the bill through; for the members who had opposed the grant, and now conceived they might have the credit of being charitable without the expense, agreed to its passage; and then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urged the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause worked both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claimed and received the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected, the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day, and I do not remember any of my political manoeuvres, the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excused myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refused. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and



therefore refused also to give such a list. He then desired I would at least give him my advice "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those who you know will give something; next to those who you are uncertain whether they will give anything or not, and show them the list of those who have given, and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laughed and thanked me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he asked of *everybody*, and he obtained a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch Street.

Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages ploughed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them, and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing, but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the bricked foot pavement that was on each side next the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry-shod, but, the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbors' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighborhood that might be obtained by this small expense; the

greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, etc., etc., as buyers could more easily get at them, and by not having, in windy weather, the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences. It was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and thus raised a general desire to have all the streets paved, and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England, in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, his giving a sample of the utility of lamps by placing one at his door, that the people were first impressed with the idea of enlightening all the city. The honor of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London. Those we found inconvenient in these respects: they admitted no air below, the smoke, therefore, did not readily go out but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford, giving, besides, the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it, and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke and crevices admitting air below, to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued

bright till morning, and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

I have sometimes wondered that the Londoners did not, from the effect holes in the bottom of the globe lamps used at Vauxhall have in keeping them clean, learn to have such holes in their street lamps. But these holes being made for another purpose, viz., to communicate flame more suddenly to the wick by a little flux hanging down through them, the other use, of letting in air, seems not to have been thought of, and therefore, after the lamps have been lit a few hours, the streets of London are very poorly illuminated.

The mention of these improvements puts me in mind of one I proposed, when in London, to Dr Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects. I had observed that the streets, when dry, were never swept, and the light dust carried away, but it was suffered to accumulate till wet weather reduced it to mud, and then, after lying some days so deep on the pavement that there was no crossing but in paths kept clean by poor people with brooms, it was with great labor raked together and thrown up into carts open above, the sides of which suffered some of the slush at every jolt on the pavement to shake out and fall, sometimes to the annoyance of foot-passengers. The reason given for not sweeping the dusty streets was, that the dust would fly into the windows of shops and houses.

An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven Street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavement with a birch broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of sickness. I asked who employed her to sweep there, she said, "Nobody, but I am very poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentle-folkses's doors, and hopes they will give me something." I bid her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling; this was at nine o'clock, at twelve she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working, I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street

was swept perfectly clean, and all the dust placed in the gutter, which was in the middle; and the next rain washed it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean.

I then judged that if that feeble woman could sweep such a street in three hours, a strong, active man might have done it in half the time. And here let me remark the convenience of having but one gutter in such a narrow street, running down its middle, instead of two, one on each side, near the footway; for where all the rain that falls on a street runs from the sides and meets in the middle, it forms there a current strong enough to wash away all the mud it meets with; but when divided into two channels, it is often too weak to cleanse either, and only makes the mud it finds more fluid, so that the wheels of carriages and feet of horses throw and dash it upon the foot-pavement, which is thereby rendered foul and slippery, and sometimes splash it upon those who are walking. My proposal, communicated to the good doctor, was as follows.

"For the more effectual cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster, it is proposed that the several watchmen be contracted with to have the dust swept up in dry seasons, and the mud raked up at other times, each in the several streets and lanes of his round, that they be furnished with brooms and other proper instruments for these purposes, to be kept at their respective stands ready to furnish the poor people they may employ in the service.

"That in the dry summer months the dust be all swept up into heaps at proper distances, before the shops and windows of houses are usually opened, when the scavengers, with close-covered carts, shall also carry it away.

"That the mud, when raked up, be not left in heaps to be spread abroad again by the wheels of carriages and trampling of horses, but that the scavengers be provided with bodies of carts, not placed high upon wheels, but low upon sliders, with lattice bottoms, which, being covered with straw, will retain the mud thrown into them, and permit the water to drain from it, whereby it will become much lighter, water making the greatest part of its weight; these bodies of carts to be placed

at convenient distances, and the mud brought to them in wheelbarrows; they remaining where placed till the mud is drained, and then horses brought to draw them away."

I have since had doubts of the practicability of the latter part of this proposal, on account of the narrowness of some streets, and the difficulty of placing the draining-sled so as not to encumber too much the passage, but I am still of opinion that the former, requiring the dust to be swept up and carried away before the shops are open, is very practicable in the summer, when the days are long, for, in walking through the Strand and Fleet Street one morning at seven o'clock, I observed there was not one shop open though it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours, the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live much by candle-light, and sleep by sun-shine, and yet often complain, a little absurdly, of the duty on candles, and the high price of tallow.

Some may think these trifling matters not worth minding or relating, but when they consider that though dust blown into the eyes of a single person, or into a single shop on a windy day, is but of small importance, yet the great number of the instances in a populous city, and its frequent repetitions give it weight and consequence, perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some attention to affairs of this seemingly low nature. Human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. The money may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it, but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him and enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument. With these sentiments I have hazarded the few preceding pages, hoping they may afford hints which some time or other may be useful to a city I love, having lived many years in it very hap-

pily, and perhaps to some of our towns in America.

1788

1791

## RULES BY WHICH A GREAT EMPIRE MAY BE REDUCED TO A SMALL ONE

PRESENTED TO A LATE MINISTER,  
WHEN HE ENTERED UPON HIS  
ADMINISTRATION

AN ancient sage boasted that, though he could not fiddle, he knew how to make a *great city of a little one*. The science that I, a modern simpleton, am about to communicate is the very reverse.

I address myself to all ministers who have the management of extensive dominions, which from their very greatness are become troublesome to govern because the multiplicity of their affairs leaves no time for *fiddling*.

I In the first place, gentlemen, you are to consider that a great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges. Turn your attention, therefore, first to your *remotest* provinces, that, as you get rid of them, the next may follow in order.

II. That the possibility of this separation may always exist, take special care the provinces are never incorporated with the mother country, that they do not enjoy the same common rights, the same privileges in commerce; and that they are governed by *severer* laws, all of *your enacting*, without allowing them any share in the choice of the legislators. By carefully making and preserving such distinctions, you will (to keep to my simile of the cake) act like a wise gingerbread baker, who, to facilitate a division, cuts his dough half through in those places where, when baked, he would have it *broken to pieces*.

III. Those remote provinces have perhaps been acquired, purchased, or conquered at the *sole expense* of the settlers, or their ancestors, without the aid of the mother country. If this should happen to increase her *strength*, by their growing numbers, ready to join in her wars, her *commerce*, by their growing demand for her manufactures, or her *naval power*, by greater employment for her ships and seamen,

they may probably suppose some merit in this, and that it entitles them to some favor; you are therefore to *forget it all, or resent it*, as if they had done you injury. If they happen to be zealous whigs, friends of liberty, nurtured in revolution principles, *remember all that* to their prejudice, and resolve to punish it, for such principles, after a revolution is thoroughly established, are of *no more use*, they are even *odious and abominable*.

IV. However peaceably your colonies have submitted to your government, shown their affection to your interests, and patiently borne their grievances, you are to *suppose* them always inclined to revolt, and treat them accordingly. Quarter troops among them, who by their insolence may *provoke* the rising of mobs, and by their bullets and bayonets *suppress* them. By this means, like the husband who uses his wife ill *from suspicion*, you may in time convert your *suspensions* into *realities*.

V. Remote provinces must have *Governors and Judges*, to represent the Royal Person, and execute everywhere the delegated parts of his office and authority. You ministers know that much of the strength of government depends on the *opinion* of the people, and much of that opinion on the *choice of rulers* placed immediately over them. If you send them wise and good men for governors, who study the interest of the colonists and advance their prosperity, they will think their King wise and good, and that he wishes the welfare of his subjects. If you send them learned and upright men for judges, they will think him a lover of justice. This may attach your provinces more to his government. You are therefore to be careful whom you recommend for those offices. If you can find prodigals who have ruined their fortunes, broken gamesters, or stockjobbers, these may do well as *governors*, for they will probably be rapacious and provoke the people by their extortions. Wrangling proctors and pettifogging lawyers, too, are not amiss, for they will be for ever disputing and quarrelling with their little parliaments. If withal they should be ignorant, wrong-headed, and unsolent, so much the better. Attorneys' clerks and Newgate solicitors will do for *Chief Justices*, especially if they hold their places *during your pleasure*, and all will contribute to

impress those ideas of your government that are proper for a people *you would wish to renounce it*.

VI. To confirm these impressions, and strike them deeper, whenever the injured come to the capital with complaints of maladministration, oppression, or injustice, punish such suitors with long delay, enormous expense, and a final judgment in favor of the oppressor. This will have an admirable effect every way. The trouble of future complaints will be prevented, and governors and judges will be encouraged to further acts of oppression and injustice, and thence the people may become more disaffected, and at length desperate.

VII. When such governors have crammed their coffers and made themselves so odious to the people that they can no longer remain among them with safety to their persons, *recall and reward* them with pensions. You may make them *baronets* too, if that respectable order should not think fit to resent it. All will contribute to encourage new governors in the same practice and make the supreme government *detestable*.

VIII. If, when you are engaged in war, your colonies should vie in liberal aids of men and money against the common enemy, upon your simple requisitions, and give far beyond their abilities, reflect that a penny taken from them by your power is more honorable to you than a pound presented by their benevolence; despise therefore their voluntary grants, and resolve to harass them with novel taxes. They will probably complain to your parliaments that they are taxed by a body in which they have no representative, and that this is contrary to common right. They will petition for redress. Let the parliaments flout their claims, reject their petitions, refuse even to suffer the reading of them, and treat the petitioners with the utmost contempt. Nothing can have a better effect in producing the alienation proposed; for though many can forgive injuries, *none ever forgave contempt*.

IX. In laying these taxes, never regard the heavy burdens those remote people already undergo in defending their own frontiers, supporting their own provincial governments, making new roads, building bridges, churches, and other public edifices, which in old coun-

tries have been done to your hands by your ancestors, but which occasion constant calls and demands on the purses of a new people. Forget the *restraints* you lay on their trade for *your own* benefit and the advantage a *monopoly* of this trade gives your exacting merchants. Think nothing of the wealth those merchants and your manufacturers acquire by the colony commerce; their increased ability thereby to pay taxes at home; their accumulating, in the price of their commodities, most of those taxes, and so levying them from their consuming customers; all this, and the employment and support of thousands of your poor by the colonists, you are *entirely to forget*. But remember to make your arbitrary tax more grievous to your provinces, by public declarations importing that your power of taxing them has *no limits*, so that when you take from them without their consent one shilling in the pound, you have a clear right to the other nineteen. This will probably weaken every idea of *security in their property* and convince them that under such a government they *have nothing they can call their own*, which can scarce fail of producing the *happiest consequences*!

X. Possibly, indeed, some of them might still comfort themselves and say, "Though we have no property, we have yet *something* left that is valuable; we have constitutional *liberty*, both of person and of conscience. This King, these Lords, and these Commons, who it seems are too remote from us to know us and feel for us, cannot take from us our *habeas corpus* right, or our right of trial by a jury of our neighbors, they cannot deprive us of the exercise of our religion, alter our ecclesiastical constitutions, and compel us to be Papists, if they please, or Mahometans." To annihilate this comfort, begin by laws to perplex their commerce with infinite regulations, impossible to be remembered and observed, ordain seizures of their property for every failure; take away the trial of such property by jury, and give it to arbitrary judges of your own appointing, and of the lowest characters in the country, whose salaries and emoluments are to arise out of the dunes or condemnations, and whose appointments are *during pleasure*. Then let there be a formal declaration of both Houses that opposition to your edicts

is *treason*, and that any person suspected of treason in the provinces may, according to some obsolete law, be seized and sent to the metropolis of the empire for trial, and pass an act, that those there charged with certain other offenses shall be sent away in chains from their friends and country to be tried in the same manner for felony. Then erect a new Court of Inquisition among them, accompanied by an armed force, with instructions to transport all such suspected persons, to be ruined by the expense if they bring over evidences to prove their innocence, or be found guilty and hanged if they cannot afford it. And lest the people should think you cannot possibly go any farther, pass another solemn declaratory act, "that King, Lords, Commons had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the unrepresented provinces IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER." This will include *spiritual* with temporal, and, taken together, must operate wonderfully to your purpose, by convincing them that they are at present under a power something like that spoken of in the scriptures, which can not only *kill their bodies* but *dann their souls* to all eternity, by compelling them, if it pleases, to *worship the Devil*!

XI. To make your taxes more odious and more likely to procure resistance, send from the capital a board of officers to superintend the collection, composed of the most *indiscreet, ill-bred, and insolent* you can find. Let these have large salaries out of the extorted revenue, and live in open, grating luxury upon the sweat and blood of the industrious, whom they are to worry continually with groundless and expensive prosecutions before the above-mentioned arbitrary revenue judges, *all at the cost of the party prosecuted*, though acquitted, because the *King is to pay no costs*. Let these men, by your order, be exempted from all the common taxes and burdens of the province, though they and their property are protected by its laws. If any revenue officers are *suspected* of the least tenderness for the people, discard them. If others are justly complained of, protect and reward them. If any of the under officers behave so as to provoke the people to drub them, promote those to better offices.

this will encourage others to procure for themselves such profitable drubbings, by multiplying and enlarging such provocations, and *all will work towards the end you aim at.*

XII. Another way to make your tax odious is to misapply the produce of it. If it was originally appropriated for the *defense* of the provinces, the better support of government, and the administration of justice, where it may be *necessary*, then apply none of it to that *defense*, but bestow it where it is *not necessary*, in augmented salaries or pensions to every governor who has distinguished himself by his enmity to the people, and by calumniating them to their sovereign. This will make them pay it more unwillingly and be more apt to quarrel with those that collect it and those that imposed it, who will quarrel again with them, and all shall contribute to your *main purpose* of making them *weary of your government*.

XIII. If the people of any province have been accustomed to support their own governors and judges to satisfaction, you are to apprehend that such governors and judges may be thereby influenced to treat the people kindly, and to do them justice. This is another reason for applying part of that revenue in larger salaries to such governors and judges, given, as their commissions are, *during your pleasure* only, forbidding them to take any salaries from their provinces, that thus the people may no longer hope any kindness from their governors, or (in Crown cases) any justice from their judges. And, as the money thus misapplied in one province is extorted from all, probably *all will resent the misapplication*.

XIV. If the parliaments of your provinces should dare to claim rights, or complain of your administration, order them to be harassed with *repeated dissolutions*. If the same men are continually returned by new elections, adjourn their meetings to some country village, where they cannot be accommodated, and there keep them *during pleasure*; for thus, you know, is your *PREROGATIVE*; and an excellent one it is, as you may manage it to promote discontents among the people, diminish their respect, and *increase their disaffection*.

XV. Convert the brave, honest officers of

your *navy* into pumping tide-waiters and colony officers of the *customs*. Let those who in time of war fought gallantly in defense of the commerce of their countrymen, in peace be taught to prey upon it. Let them learn to be corrupted by great and real smugglers; but (to show their diligence) scour with armed boats every bay, harbor, river, creek, cove, or nook throughout the coast of your colonies, stop and detain every coaster, every wood-boat, every fisherman, tumble their cargoes and even their ballast inside out and upside down, and, if a penn'orth of pins is found unentered, let the whole be seized and confiscated. Thus shall the trade of your colonists suffer more from their friends in time of peace than it did from their enemies in war. Then let these boats' crews land upon every farm in their way, rob the orchards, steal the pigs and the poultry, and insult the inhabitants. If the injured and exasperated farmers, unable to procure other justice, should attack the aggressors, drub them, and burn their boats, you are to call this *high treason and rebellion*, order fleets and armies into their country, and threaten to carry all the offenders three thousand miles to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. *O' this will work admirably!*

XVI. If you are told of discontents in your colonies, never believe that they are general, or that you have given occasion for them, therefore do not think of applying any remedy, or of changing any offensive measure. Redress no grievance, lest they should be encouraged to demand the redress of some other grievance. Grant no request that is just and reasonable, lest they should make another that is unreasonable. Take all your informations of the state of the colonies from your governors and officers in enmity with them. Encourage and reward these *leasing-makers*, secrete their lying accusations, lest they should be confuted, but act upon them as the clearest evidence; and believe nothing you hear from the friends of the people: suppose all *their* complaints to be invented and promoted by a few factious demagogues, whom if you could catch and hang, all would be quiet. Catch and hang a few of them accordingly; and the *blood of the martyrs* shall *work miracles* in favor of your purpose.

XVII. If you see *rival nations* rejoicing at the prospect of your disunion with your provinces and endeavoring to promote it; if they translate, publish, and applaud all the complaints of your discontented colonists, at the same time privately stimulating you to severer measures, let not that *alarm* or offend you *Why* should it, since you all mean *the same thing?*

XVIII. If any colony should at their own charge erect a fortress to secure against the fleets of a foreign enemy, get your governor to betray that fortress into your hands. Never think of paying what it cost the country, for that would look, at least, like some regard for justice; but turn it into a citadel to awe the inhabitants and curb their commerce. If they should have lodged in such a fortress the very arms they bought and used to aid you in your conquests, seize them all, it will provoke like *ingratitude* added to *robbery*. One admirable effect of these operations will be to discourage every other colony from erecting such defenses, and so your enemies may more easily invade them, to the great disgrace of your government, and of course the furtherance of your project

XIX. Send armies into their country on pretence of protecting the inhabitants, but, instead of garrisoning the forts on their frontiers with those troops, to prevent incursions, demolish those forts, and order the troops into the heart of the country, that the savages may be encouraged to attack the frontiers, and that the troops may be protected by the inhabitants. This will seem to proceed from your ill will or your ignorance, and contribute farther to produce and strengthen an opinion among them, *that you are no longer fit to govern them*

XX. Lastly, invest the general of your army in the provinces with great and unconstitutional powers, and free him from the control of even your own civil governors. Let him have troops enough under his command, with all the fortresses in his possession; and who knows but (like some provincial generals in the Roman empire, and encouraged by the universal discontent you have produced) he may take it into his head to set up for himself? If he should, and you have carefully practiced these few *excellent rules* of mine, take my word

for it, all the provinces will immediately join him, and you will that day (if you have not done it sooner) get rid of the trouble of governing them, and all the *plagues* attending their *commerce* and connection from henceforth and for ever.

1773

## THE WHISTLE

TO MADAME BRILLON

This informal essay in letter form, sent to a cultured and witty acquaintance of Franklin's in Paris, is important for its literary influence in America during the next two decades. Its common-sense theme, its repetition of an axiomatic saying, and its series of brief illustrations are the basis of Noah Webster's "Prompter" essays and of Dennie's "Farrago" papers, a type which for a time competed with the Addison-Goldsmith stream of familiar essays

Passy,<sup>1</sup> November 10, 1779

I RECEIVED my dear friend's two letters, one for Wednesday and one for Saturday. This is again Wednesday I do not deserve one for today, because I have not answered the former. But, indolent as I am, and averse to writing, the fear of having no more of your pleasing epistles, if I do not contribute to the correspondence, obliges me to take up my pen; and as Mr. B. has kindly sent me word that he sets out tomorrow to see you, instead of spending this Wednesday evening as I have done its namesakes, in your delightful company, I sit down to spend it in thinking of you, in writing to you, and in reading over and over again your letters

I am charmed with your description of Paradise, and with your plan of living there, and I approve much of your conclusion, that, in the meantime, we should draw all the good we can from this world. In my opinion, we might all draw more good from it than we do, and suffer less evil, if we would take care not to give too much for *whistles*. For it seems to me, that most of the unhappy people we meet with, are become so by neglect of that caution

You ask what I mean? You love stories, and will excuse my telling one of myself.

When I was a child of seven years old, my

<sup>1</sup> then a suburb of Paris

friends, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth, put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money, and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation, and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

This however was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing in my mind, so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle*, and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle*.

When I saw one too ambitious of court favor, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle*.

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and running them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed*, said I, *too much for his whistle*.

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man*, said I, *you pay too much for your whistle*.

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and running his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man*, said I, *you are providing pain for yourself, instead of pleasure, you give too much for your whistle*.

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine

clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle*.

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles*.

Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought, for if they were put to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle*.

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours very sincerely and with unalterable affection,

B. FRANKLIN

1779

1818

### 30 DIALOGUE BETWEEN FRANKLIN AND THE GOUT

Midnight, October 22, 1780

*Franklin* Ehl Oh! Ehl What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

*Gout* Many things; you have eat and drunk too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

*Franklin* Who is it that accuses me?

*Gout* It is I, even I, the Gout

*Franklin* What! my enemy in person?

*Gout* No, not your enemy.

*Franklin* I repeat it. my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

*Gout* The world may think as it pleases; 50 it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know



that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another who never takes any.

*Franklin.* I take—Ehl! Oh!—as much exercise—Ehl!—as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

*Gout.* Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride; or, if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast, four dishes of tea with cream, and one or two buttered roasts, with slices of hung beef, which I fancy are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterward you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily exercise. But all this I could pardon in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids,<sup>1</sup> the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living, but a body replete with stagnant humors, ready to fall a

<sup>1</sup> the animal fluids originally blood, phlegm, bile, and black bile or melancholy, of which the body was believed chiefly to consist

prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those humors, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy, places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and most agreeable and instructive conversation; all which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge,—and that.

*Franklin.* Oh! Ehl! Oh! Ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, madam, a truce with your corrections!

*Gout.* No, sir, no,—I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good, —therefore—

*Franklin.* Oh! Eh! Eh!—It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage

*Gout.* That, of all imaginable exercises is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion, we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over, ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting, but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day, and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by a fire. Flatter yourself then no longer, that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids,

in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and by a return of this weight, thus repulsion again succeeds, thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time, depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established. Behold your fair friend<sup>1</sup> at Auteuil, a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science, than half a dozen such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honors you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence, and its concomitant maladies, to be endured by her horses. In this see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no further from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

*Franklin.* Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

*Gout.* I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office, take that, and that.

*Franklin.* Oh! Ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

*Gout.* No, no, I have a good number of twinges for you tonight, and you may be sure of some more tomorrow.

*Franklin.* What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! Eh! Can no one bear it for me?

*Gout.* Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

*Franklin.* How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

*Gout.* Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offenses against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

*Franklin.* Read it then.

*Gout.* It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

<sup>1</sup> Madam Helvetius

*Franklin.* Proceed. I am all attention.

*Gout.* Do you remember how often you have promised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Boulogne, in the garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging at one time it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing, but your insuperable love of ease?

*Franklin.* That I confess may have happened occasionally, probably ten times in a year.

*Gout.* Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

*Franklin.* Is it possible?

*Gout.* So possible, that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know M. Brillion's gardens, and what fine walks they contain, you know the handsome flight of a hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practice of visiting this amiable family twice a week, after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile, up and down stairs, as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

*Franklin.* I cannot immediately answer that question.

*Gout.* I will do it for you, not once.

*Franklin.* Not once?

*Gout.* Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady with her lovely children and friends eager to walk with you, and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been your choice? Why, to sit on the terrace, satisfying yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them. On the contrary, you call for tea and the chessboard; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestowed you a little, you step into your carriage. How

absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

*Franklin.* I am convinced now of the justness of Poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

*Gout.* So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

*Franklin.* But do you charge among my crimes, that I return in a carriage from Mr. Brillons?

*Gout.* Certainly; for, having been seated all the while, you cannot object the fatigue of the day, and cannot want therefore the relief of a carriage

*Franklin.* What then would you have me do with my carriage?

*Gout.* Burn it if you choose; you would at least get heat out of it once in this way, or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you; observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, etc.; you may find every day, among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and perhaps crippled by weight of years, and too long and too great labor. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul, and, at the same time, after your visit to the Brillons', if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

*Franklin.* Ah! how tiresome you are!

*Gout.* Well, then, to my office, it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There.

*Franklin.* Ohhhl what a devil of a physician!

*Gout.* How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

*Franklin.* I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future, for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint, that I have also not been unfriendly to you. I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against

you; if then you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful too.

*Gout.* I can scarcely acknowledge that as any objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you indeed, but cannot injure me. And, as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy?—but to our business,—there.

*Franklin.* Oh! oh!—for Heaven's sake leave me! and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily, and live temperately.

*Gout.* I know you too well. You promise fair, but, after a few months of good health, you will return to your old habits, your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place, for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend*.

1780

## LETTERS

*To Samuel Mather*

Passy, May 12, 1784

REV<sup>d</sup> SIR,

I received your kind letter, with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet, if they make a deep impression on one active mind in a hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which, though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book, entitled "Essays to do Good," which I think was written by your father. It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out, but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good* than on any other kind of reputation, and if I have been,

as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

You mention your being in your 78th year; I am in my 79th; we are grown old together. It is now more than 60 years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip 10 to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "Stoop, stoop!" I did not understand him, till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, "You are young, and have the world before you, stoop 20 as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps." This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see again my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723, I 30 visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773 I was in England, in 1775 I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy. I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismission from this employment here, and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes however attend my dear country. *Esse perpetua*. It is now blest with an excellent constitution, may it last for ever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes, and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France would infallibly bring the English 50 again upon our backs; and yet we have some

wild heads among our countrymen, who are endeavoring to weaken that connection! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements; our credit by fulfilling our contracts; and friends by gratitude and kindness, for we know not how soon we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

### *To Mason Weems and Edward Gantt*<sup>1</sup>

When, in March, 1783, the Episcopalian clergy of Connecticut, cut off by the Revolution from communion with their former spiritual head, the Bishop of London, met and elected Samuel Seabury as their bishop, they discovered that he could not be properly consecrated by the English Episcopacy without declaring allegiance to King George, as head of the Church of England. In this quandary, two Episcopalians applied for Franklin's good offices in the matter and received the following characteristic reply. Franklin's advice was in part followed when, after being rejected by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Seabury went to Aberdeen and was consecrated bishop by the "non-juring" bishops of Scotland. Thus the apostolic succession was established, and later the American Anglicans were organized as the independent Protestant Episcopal Church.

Passy, July 18, 1784

GENTLEMEN,

On receipt of your letter, acquainting me that the Archbishop would not permit you to be ordained, unless you took the Oath of Allegiance, I applied to a clergyman of my acquaintance for information on the subject of your obtaining ordination here. His opinion was, that it could not be done; and that, if it were done, you would be required to vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordained by their bishop in America, powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was, "The thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Catholics."

<sup>1</sup> Mason Locke Weems (1760-1835), clergyman of Washington's parish in Virginia and later his biographer. Edward Gantt (1746-c. 1837), clergyman and physician in Maryland.

This is an affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask questions and purpose means that are improper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well, if you were of the Church of Ireland? The religion is the same, though there is the different set of bishops and archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the Bishop of Derry, who is a man of liberal sentiments, he might give you orders as of that church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you, (and I am not sure that the Bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you, unless you become Lutherans,) what is to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopalian clergy of America, in my humble opinion, cannot do better than to follow the example of the first clergy of Scotland, soon after the conversion of that country to Christianity, who when their king had built the Cathedral of St. Andrew's, and requested the King of Northumberland for orders, and their request was refused; they assembled in the Cathedral, and, the miter, crozier, and robes of a bishop being laid upon the altar, they, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number; when the King said to him, "Arise, go to the altar, and receive your office at the hand of God." His brethren led him to the altar, robed him, put the crozier in his hand, and the miter on his head, and he became the first Bishop of Scotland.

If the British Isles sunk in the sea (and the surface of this globe has suffered greater changes), you would probably take some such method as this; and if they persist in denying you ordination, 'tis the same thing. A hundred years hence, when people are more enlightened, it will be wondered at, that men in America, qualified by their learning and piety to pray for and instruct their neighbors, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a voyage of six thousand miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury; who seems, by your account, to have as little regard for the souls of the people of Maryland, as King William's attorney-general, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The Reverend Commissary Blair, who pro-

jected the College of that Province, and was in England to solicit benefactions and a charter, relates that the Queen, in the King's absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the charter, which was to be given, with \$3000 in money, he opposed the grant, saying that the nation was engaged in an expensive war, that the money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least occasion for the college in Virginia. Blair represented to him, that its intention was to educate and qualify young men to be ministers of the Gospel, much wanted there; and begged Mr. Attorney would consider, that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved, as well as the people of England. "Souls!" says he, "damn your souls. Make tobacco!" I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

### To Mrs. Sarah Bache

The Order of the Cincinnati (from Cincinnati, who left his plow in its furrow to go to the defense of Rome), an ancestor of the G. A. R., the American Legion, and similar groups, but much more exclusive in its nature, was organized in May, 1783, to comprise officers of three years' standing in the Revolutionary Army and their oldest male descendants in direct line. It was at once opposed by Adams, Jefferson, and others as tending to a hereditary military aristocracy and as a scheme for monopolizing the chief offices in the new Confederacy. Its chief legacy to the country was the rival Tammany Society, organized in 1789 to counteract its aristocratic influence. Franklin, in the following letter, jestingly satirizes the pretensions and elaborate insignia of the Order.

Passy, Jan. 26, 1784

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by Capt. Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati*. My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance, I only wonder that, when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the Articles of Confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the Congress or of any particular state, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity from their fellow citizens,

and form an order of *hereditary Knights*, in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribbons and crosses they have seen among them hanging to the buttonholes of foreign officers. And I suppose those, who disapprove of it, have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who are always exacting little observances of respect, that, "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*"

In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribbon and badge according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honor on their posterity. For honor, worthily obtained (as for example that of our officers), is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honor does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valor, is promoted by the Emperor to the rank of mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the mandarin himself, on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public.

Thus *ascending* honor is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending* honor, to posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdainful to the employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it, which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family,

estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride and beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage. . . .

The gentleman, who made the voyage to France to provide the ribbons and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classic elegance and correctness; and, since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but Gen. Washington, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle* as looking too much like a *dindon*, or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country: he is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree near the river, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk, and, when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but, like those among men who live by sharpening and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little *Kingbird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *Kingbirds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call *Chevaliers d'Industrie*.

I am, on this account, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours, the

first of the species seen in Europe being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth. He is a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British Guards, who should presume to invade his farmyard with a red coat on. . . .

B. FRANKLIN

### *To Ezra Stiles*

This letter, written in the month before Franklin's death, gives his maturest religious views. The Reverend Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College from 1778 to 1795, was a religious liberal and interested in the advancement of natural science.

Philad<sup>a</sup>, March 9, 1790

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of Jan'y 28, and am glad you have at length received the portrait of Gov'r Yale from his family, and deposited it in the College Library. He was a great and good man, and had the merit of doing infinite service to your country by his munificence to that institution. The honor you propose doing me by placing mine in the same room with his, is much too great for my deserts, but you always had a partiality for me, and to that it must be ascribed. I am, however, too much obliged to Yale College, the first learned society that took notice of me and adorned me with its honors, to refuse a request that comes from it through so esteemed a friend. But I do not think any one of the portraits you mention as in my possession worthy of the place and company you propose to place it in. You have an excellent artist lately arrived. If he will undertake to make one for you, I shall cheerfully pay the expense, but he must not delay setting about it, or I may slip through his fingers, for I am now in my eighty-fifth year, and very infirm.

I send with this a very learned work, as it seems to me, on the ancient Samaritan coins, lately printed in Spain, and at least curious for the beauty of the impression. Please to accept it for your College Library. I have subscribed for the Encyclopaedia now printing here, with the intention of presenting it to the College. I shall probably depart before the work is finished, but shall leave directions for its con-

tinuance to the end. With this you will receive some of the first numbers.

You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavor in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental principles of all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them.

As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see, but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters<sup>1</sup> in England, some doubts as to his divinity, though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as probably it has, of making his doctrines more respected and better observed; especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the unbelievers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure.

I shall only add, respecting myself, that, having experienced the goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously through a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter enclosed, which I wrote in answer to one from a zealous religionist, whom I had relieved.

<sup>1</sup> The chief dissenting sect in England, the Presbyterians, had by the close of the eighteenth century largely become Unitarian in their religious views. Franklin carried on friendly correspondence with their great leader, Joseph Priestley, who migrated to Pennsylvania in 1794.

in a paralytic case by electricity, and who, being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious though rather imperunent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter, which will show something of my disposition

relating to religion. With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am, your obliged old friend and most obedient humble servant

B. FRANKLIN





~ III ~

*Revolution*  
*and*  
*Reorganization*



## Revolution and Reorganization

1765-1789

At this distance, the civil conflict called the American Revolution appears to have been at once avoidable and inevitable. A more intelligent understanding on the part of the British ministry of its own interests and the temper of the Americans, a more tolerant attitude on the part of the provincials, might have delayed the separation for years. Possibly, even, the English-thinking race might have evolved a formula for continuing as a united people, with an influence in the councils of the world far greater than that which they have had as divided nations. But such understanding and tolerance were not possible. Englishmen in England could not know the points of view of Englishmen with a century of more or less independent existence and experience on a distant continent, and the American provinces were growing and developing too swiftly and turbulently to keep the slower pace necessary for harmonious living with the mother country.

When the battle of Lexington and Concord was fought in 1775, the population of the British provinces south of Canada had increased to nearly two and a half millions, double that of fifteen years before. Three-fourths of the inhabitants still lived within fifty miles of the sea or along the larger navigable rivers. The boundary of real settlement skirted the coast in Maine and crossed central New Hampshire and southern Vermont to Lake George, veered westward to include the Mohawk Valley in New York, dropped south through eastern Pennsylvania, then curved west to Pittsburgh and Wheeling and sharply back to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, and thence followed the eastern base of the mountains to near the western tip of South Carolina, returning through eastern Georgia to the sea at the Florida line. East of this boundary there were still large unoccupied areas, while to the west of it would appear on the map detached spots representing venturesome clusters of families which, under the leadership of men like John Sevier, James Robertson, and Daniel Boone, had penetrated the mountain barrier into the Indian hunting grounds of eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, western Virginia, and the upper Ohio Valley. Of the two million white inhabitants, ninety per cent were Protestant and English-speaking. In east-central Pennsylvania a large group retained its German speech, but elsewhere the Germans, Dutch, Swedes, and Huguenot French, and the Jewish colony at Newport became more speedily assimilated. Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Charleston, in that order, were the only towns of any size.

The greater portion of the population was agricultural, farmers and planters, including the artisans who owned and cultivated small farms. They were an inde-

pendent and stable element, except as the financial depression following the artificial prosperity of the French and Indian War period tended to make them restless and insecure. The frontier areas were sparsely occupied by a bold, restless, and reckless lot whose turbulence and frequent lawlessness, as exhibited in the massacre of a village of peaceful Indians in Pennsylvania by the "Paxton boys" in 1763, was a cause of concern to the more settled population. In the towns the mercantile, professional, and official classes held control in general. Though most of the merchants were small shopkeepers, the opportunities for quick wealth offered by speculation and smuggling, and by profiteering and privateering during the prolonged war periods, had brought to the more enterprising large wealth and influence. Upon the free-and-easy methods of these gentry the British attempts at enforcement of the commercial laws fell most heavily. Besides these three groups, there were the increasing class of laborers and mechanics, largely unfranchised, in the towns, who, after earning high wages while war was in progress, were now out of employment and in many cases reduced to poverty and desperate circumstances. Though the merchants and lawyers led in opposition to British legislation and coercion, it was the unattached artisans and laborers of Boston, New York, and other towns who made up the anti-Tory mobs and, with farmers' sons from the country, mainly filled the ranks of the Continental armies.

The chief economic and political grievances which within a decade converted the temper of the Americans from self-assertive loyalty to open defiance were the curbs upon colonial manufactures, currency, and freedom of legislation; attempts to enforce dead-letter trade and navigation laws; new measures of direct taxation, ostensibly for colonial protection but actually to reduce the heavy burden of taxation in England; the ban upon expansion in the Indian country; and the coercive measures, enforced by the courts and the army, to repress American protest and opposition. Widespread boycotts of British goods, the Boston Massacre, the "tea parties" at Boston, Annapolis, and elsewhere, the summoning of a Continental Congress, creation of Committees of Safety and Correspondence, tarring and feathering of crown officers and Tory sympathizers, raising of provincial militia—the Minute Men—and assembling of munitions of war, were phases of rising disaffection and disturbance, culminating in bloodshed at Lexington and Concord and such bold challenging of British authority as the Mecklenburg Resolutions in North Carolina, in 1775.

The work of organizing and implementing popular opposition passed from the hands of the merchants who first fomented it into those of a remarkable group of agitators, mostly young lawyers and publicists. The oratory of James Otis against the Writs of Assistance in 1761 and of Patrick Henry before the Virginia Convention of 1775; and in print the *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer* (1767) of John Dickinson, the *Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress* (1774) of the youthful

Hamilton, and the *Novanglus* letters (1775) of John Adams matched the loyal remonstrances of Samuel Seabury's *Westchester Farmer* (1774), Daniel Leonard's *Massachusettsensis* letters (1774-75), and Joseph Galloway's *Candid Examination of the Mutual Claims of Great Britain and the Colonies* (1775). Most effective of all were the trenchant *Common Sense* (1776) of Thomas Paine, boldly advocating separation from England, and the indefatigable circular letters and addresses of Samuel Adams of Boston, one of the shrewdest and most successful propagandists and organizers that ever lived.

Up to 1776, at least, the colonists spoke and wrote as Englishmen fighting for English rights under an English king, and acting upon English precedents and political principles. To the eve of the Revolution, they saw themselves as successors to Englishmen who had dethroned Charles I and set up the Commonwealth, who expelled James II and called in William and Mary, and who invited the German house of Hanover to assume the crown in place of the banished Stuarts. It is true that Jefferson, John Adams, and Hamilton knew the writings of the Frenchmen Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu—themselves derivative from Locke—but their political ideas had been familiar to Englishmen from the time of Milton, Roger Williams, Algernon Sidney, and John Locke, who had expounded them in his *Treatises on Government* (1690). Hamilton, expressing the American viewpoint, was in harmony with the English legalist Blackstone when he wrote: "The origin of all civil government, being justly established, must be a voluntary compact between the rulers and the ruled, and must be liable to such limitations as are necessary for the security of the absolute rights of the latter."<sup>1</sup> The colonists' ideas of inalienable natural rights, the social compact and the consent of the governed, and the corollary right of resisting a government which transcends its just powers found plenty of advocates in England, like Edmund Burke, both before and during the Revolutionary War; and the employing of Hessian mercenaries was necessitated by the unwillingness of Englishmen to enlist in sufficient numbers for the subjugation of fellow Englishmen.

Not only the political but also the religious views of the Americans pointed toward resistance. Franklin and the Adamses had been brought up in Calvinist churches in which the doctrine of the Covenant was an exemplification of the compact theory,<sup>2</sup> and in which the clergy every Sunday disseminated ideas of natural rights and resistance to tyrannical authority.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, forces which opposed Calvinism and tended to break down established church authority produced similar results. Most powerful of these was deism. The "religion of

<sup>1</sup> *The Farmer Refuted: A Further Vindication of the Congress* (1775).

<sup>2</sup> See Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXII, 247-300.

<sup>3</sup> C. H. Van Tyne, "The Influence of the Clergy, and of Religious and Sectarian Forces, on the American Revolution," *American Historical Review*, XIX, 44-64 (October, 1913).

nature," with its emphasis upon reason as against the tradition of authority, which strongly influenced Franklin, was an important influence in shaping the thought of other Revolutionary leaders and writers as well. The poet Freneau in 1770 wrote in "The Power of Fancy":

What is this globe, these lands, and seas,  
And heat, and cold, and flowers, and trees . . .  
But thoughts on reason's scale combined,  
Ideas of the Almighty mind?

and again, later in life:

On one fixed point all nature moves  
Nor deviates from the path she loves;  
Her system, drawn from reason's source,  
She scorns to change her wonted course.<sup>1</sup>

The bold, individualistic, and somewhat erratic hero of Ticonderoga was at least a collaborator in the writing of perhaps the most noteworthy deistic book produced in America, *Reason the Only Oracle of Man*,<sup>2</sup> published in 1784 as the work of Ethan Allen. Chiefly written, perhaps, by Dr. Thomas Young, between 1758 and 1772, it was designed both as an attack upon Calvinism as set forth by Edwards and as a "compendious system of natural religion."<sup>3</sup> A really notable treatise, it attracted much less attention—that is, denunciation—than the memorable *Age of Reason*, written in France in 1794-96 by the English-born citizen of the United States, Thomas Paine.

The American mind came slowly and with honest reluctance to the idea of independence. In fact, the two first important phases of the war, the expulsion of the British forces from New England and the brilliant but ill-fated invasion of Canada, preceded the official separation and declaration of a state of war. When the Declaration, penned mainly by Thomas Jefferson, was signed in 1776, it perhaps represented the views of a minority of Americans; and hundreds of thousands remained loyal to the British government throughout the war. The loyalists were in general of the "better sort," often persons of property, social standing, and prominence under the royal government, and their retainers. They regarded resistance to the crown as treasonable rebellion, certain to fail and bring summary punishment upon its participants. When they protested against measures of opposition, they suffered harsh treatment from patriotic mobs, as described by Trumbull in *M'Fingal*. Great numbers left in the early days of the conflict. Many settled in the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, whose abstention from

<sup>1</sup> Freneau, "On the Uniformity and Perfection of Nature," printed in 1815.

<sup>2</sup> Available in the Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints (1938).

<sup>3</sup> For other religious and scientific influences, and for local antagonisms also tending toward separation see Carl Becker, *The Declaration of Independence* (1922), Chapter II, C. H. Lincoln, *The Revolutionary Movement in Pennsylvania* (1901); and A. L. Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (1902).

the revolutionary movement was thus made certain. Others were driven out and their estates confiscated by the states. Still others, especially in the Middle and Southern states, fought beside the royal troops, to the number, it is said, of over 50,000. The later phases of the war, the British campaigns first to cut the Union in two at the Hudson and later to subdue the Southern states, were strongly supported and prolonged through loyalist assistance. Though a few returned after the war, more than a hundred thousand persons, including much of the most stable and cultured stock in the provinces, were lost to the United States through the loyalist emigration.

Naturally, the great conflict was provocative of much outpouring of literature dealing with its spirit and issues. Besides the political arguments on both sides already mentioned, the most influential American utterance was Thomas Paine's *The Crisis*, a series of stirring appeals issued at crucial moments during the war to hearten the Americans' resistance. The loyalists about New York contributed also the spirited drinking songs of Odell and Stansbury, and Samuel Peters's *General History of Connecticut* (1782), with its gibes at his neighbors' politics and religion and its preposterous yarns anticipating the similar ones later recorded along the western frontier. In contrast, the sober and well-authenticated loyalist *History of the Massachusetts Bay Colony* was the work of Thomas Hutchinson, best of the colonial historians, and royal governor in his native province from 1769 to 1774.

The most spontaneous of the Revolutionary writings were the songs and ballads on both sides, many of them anonymous. They range from the various sets of nonsense verses set to the infectious tune of "Yankee Doodle" and the mocking "Battle of the Kegs" of Francis Hopkinson, to the scholarly "American Soldier" of Nathaniel Niles and the dignity of the anonymous ballad "Nathan Hale." Trumbull's spirited satire *M'Fingal* has been mentioned. Most active of poets on the patriot side was Philip Freneau, whose work included not only the vindictive "Gage's Confession" and the doggerel "Political Litany"—

From a kingdom that bullies and hectors and swears  
We send up to heaven our wishes and prayers,  
That we, disunited, may freemen be still,  
And Britain go on—to be damned if she will—

but also the spirited "Memorable Victory of John Paul Jones" and the noble "Eutaw Springs." His longest serious poem of the Revolution pictured the horrors of his own confinement in British prison ships in New York harbor. Freneau's imaginative poetry is most properly considered with the literature of the subsequent period.

During the war the drama, banned by Congress in the areas under its jurisdiction, was kept alive by soldiers and officers in the British garrison towns, par-



ticularly New York. It was these performances, both of standard English drama and scurrilous skits against Washington and the patriots, which captivated the interest of the boy William Dunlap, later to become the first important American dramatist. To the patriot cause, Madame Mercy Warren contributed her stilted satires *The Blockade* and *The Adulateur*, and H. H. Brackenridge his *The Battle of Bunker's Hill* and *The Death of Montgomery*, written to be acted by the schoolboys of his academy in Maryland. When, after the war, the American Company returned from the West Indies and established itself at New York, it performed in 1787 the first American success, Royall Tyler's *The Contrast*, patriotically comparing homespun American virtues with the silken superficiality and duplicity of European polite life.

The success of the Revolution found the former ruling class partly swept away and the control of government in the hands of younger men, except for a few older leaders like Franklin and Washington. Though the people in the sections not harmed by the later campaigns were mostly in a prosperous condition, the government, a unicameral congress, established under the Articles of Confederation, 1777, found itself helpless in the face of an economic and political emergency. Chiefly an advisory body after the removal of the need for urgent national defense, it was unable to secure co-operation from the states in necessary financial and political measures. Great amounts of worthless Continental and state paper money created a more paralyzing financial situation than had prevailed before the Revolution. Interstate jealousies led to discriminating legislation and hampered the efforts of Congress to regulate trade and commerce. Conflicting claims to western lands, the supervision of settlers living already outside the limits of the several states, and difficulties with the Spaniards and Indians raised new problems. Worst of all, the disbanded army, whose struggles and sacrifices had won the war, had been paid only in worthless bills and was in many cases destitute and desperate. Ex-soldiers were leaders in the attempts to prevent suits for debts by seizing courthouses in Massachusetts in 1786—called Shays' Rebellion—which brought most plainly before the states the necessity of a strong central government and led to the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

The task the convention faced in framing a new and close form of union of independent states—a virtual league of nations—was difficult in the extreme, even though simplified by the voluntary cession by several states in 1784 of their claims to western lands. State debts, validation of the currency, state and individual rights, big- and little-state jealousy, the form and powers of the federal government, the powers of the president, control of public domains, the standing army, and jurisdiction of the courts, were some of the problems to be decided, by compromise whenever possible. Few precedents existed nearer in time than those of

the Greek confederacies for such a written constitution as was desired, but a combination of ideas drawn from them, from British law interpreted in terms of Lockean principles, and from the constitutions which the several states had drawn up and adopted, produced a document which now appears almost a miracle of sagacity and satisfactoriness. Today, after a century and a half, the major disagreements regarding it are concerned with the application of its provisions rather than with its fundamental structure and principles.

Naturally, it did not meet with universal approval. Jefferson and Franklin had misgivings about it, and Patrick Henry and Governor Clinton attacked it openly. Hopkinson humorously defended it in "The New Roof," and Hamilton, Madison, and Jay produced a memorable interpretation of its advantages and scope in a series of newspaper essays entitled *The Federalist: or the New Constitution* in 1787-88. The mercantile and propertied classes generally supported it in the face of distrust on the part of the agrarian population. Out of the debate for and against its adoption arose our two basic national political parties. With the elimination of the royalist Tory party, there was a shift to the right on the part of the former Whigs. The more prosperous of them, with remnants of the Tories, the mercantile and professional groups, and the comfortable farmers and planters, argued for the proposed constitution since it promised stability and secured the interests of property. These, who assumed the name Federalist, were to continue through our history under various names as National Republicans, Whigs, and Republicans. Opposed to these were mainly the formerly unfranchised laborers and poorer farmers, jealous of centralization of power and possible encroachments upon the state assemblies which their votes could now control, who co-operated loosely as Anti-federalists and who were later to be welded together by the great political organizer Jefferson into the Democratic-Republican or Democratic party.

With some difficulty, often by shrewd bargaining and hair-breadth majorities, the better organized Federalist group secured the adherence of the necessary two-thirds of the states. With the Federal Union thus assured, the unanimous selection of General Washington as the first president momentarily harmonized all factions and inaugurated the new government not only in a wave of good feeling at home but also with some degree of respect and admiration abroad, where the name of Washington had come to be revered by many, even in the British Isles. For generations the American Revolution and the new republic thus successfully established were to be a beacon light to intellectuals and lovers of liberty in the European kingdoms.

## 1732 ~ John Dickinson ~ 1808

ONE OF THE CHIEF spokesmen of the colonies just before the Revolution was John Dickinson, a highly successful lawyer of Philadelphia and a leading conservative in the Pennsylvania legislature. His *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies*, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* between December, 1767, and February, 1768, had a strong influence in England as well as in America. Based on a sound and broad knowledge of the law, gained not only in Philadelphia but in the Middle Temple, London, they pointed out effectively the evils of the situation involving England and the colonies, but advocated pacific remedies by an appeal to legal precedent rather than to *a priori* "natural rights." Their author was thanked at a public meeting in Boston and was granted an LL.D. by Princeton. His later objection to armed resistance deprived him of much of his popularity; but he served as a soldier in the Revolution when it came, and his later career showed the reliance which his fellow countrymen placed on him though he was a member of the conservative minority. He was a leading member of the two Continental Congresses and of the Constitutional Convention, and was elected president of the State of Delaware in 1781 and of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1782-85. His last important service to his country was a series of letters signed "Fabius," in favor of the adoption of the Constitution. The famous "compromise" finally adopted by the Constitutional Convention between spokesmen of the large states and the small states, on which the present representation in House and Senate is based, owes much to Dickinson. Professor Parrington, in his *Main Currents of American Thought* (I, 219-233), selects Dickinson as the chief Revolutionary representative of the American Whigs in political thought.

Dickinson himself published *The Political Writings of John Dickinson, Esq.* (2 vols., 1801). In 1895 P. L. Ford published a first volume of *Political Writings, 1764-1774* as Vol. XIV of *The Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*. Two other volumes to follow have never appeared. A separate edition of the *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* was edited by R. T. H. Halsey (1908); and of "The Letters of Fabius" by P. L. Ford in *Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States* (1888). The standard biography is C. J. Sallé, *The Life and Times of John Dickinson*, Vol. XIII of the *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (1891). The best brief account is by James Truslow Adams in the *DAB*. For the background of the letters see R. L. Brunhouse, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LIV, 355-373 (Oct., 1930), and for an analysis of Dickinson's political views, V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought* (1927), I, 219-232.

LETTERS FROM A FARMER IN  
PENNSYLVANIA

## LETTER I

[*Thoughts on the Suspension of the  
New York Legislature*]

I AM a Farmer, settled after a variety of fortunes, near the banks of the river Delaware, in the province of Pennsylvania. I received a liberal education, and have been engaged in the busy scenes of life, but am now convinced that a man may be as happy without bustle as with it. My farm is small; my servants are few and good, I have a little money at interest; I wish for no more; my employment in my own affairs is easy; and with a contented grateful mind, I am completing the number of days allotted to me by divine goodness.

Being master of my time, I spend a good deal of it in a library, which I think the most valuable part of my small estate; and being acquainted with two or three gentlemen of abilities and learning, who honor me with their friendship, I believe I have acquired a greater share of knowledge in history and the laws and constitution of my country than is generally attained by men of my class, many of them not being so fortunate as I have been in the opportunities of getting information

From infancy I was taught to love humanity and liberty. Inquiry and experience have since confirmed my reverence for the lessons then given me, by convincing me more fully of their truth and excellence. Benevolence towards mankind excites wishes for their welfare, and such wishes endear the means of fulfilling them. Those can be found in liberty alone, and therefore her sacred cause ought to be espoused by every man, on every occasion, to the utmost of his power. As a charitable but poor person does not withhold his mite, because he cannot relieve all the distresses of the miserable, so let not any honest man suppress his sentiments concerning freedom, however small their influence is likely to be. Perhaps he may "touch some wheel" that will have an effect greater than he expects.

These being my sentiments, I am encouraged to offer to you, my countrymen, my thoughts on some late transactions that in my

opinion are of the utmost importance to you. Conscious of my defects, I have waited some time in expectation of seeing the subject treated by persons much better qualified for the task; but being therein disappointed, and apprehensive that longer delays will be injurious, I venture at length to request the attention of the public, praying only for one thing—that is, that these lines may be read with the same zeal for the happiness of British America, with which they were written.

With a good deal of surprise I have observed that little notice has been taken of an act of parliament as injurious in its principle to the liberties of these colonies as the Stamp Act was: I mean the act of suspending the legislation of New York.

The assembly of that government complied with a former act of parliament, requiring certain provisions to be made for the troops in America, in every particular, I think, except the articles of salt, pepper, and vinegar. In my opinion they acted imprudently, considering all circumstances, in not complying so far as would have given satisfaction, as several colonies did; but my dislike of their conduct in that instance has not blinded me so much that I cannot plainly perceive that they have been punished in a manner pernicious to American freedom, and justly alarming to all the colonies.

If the British parliament has a legal authority to order that we shall furnish a single article for the troops here, and to compel obedience to that order, they have the same right to order us to supply those troops with arms, clothes, and every necessary, and to compel obedience to that order also; in short, to lay any burdens they please upon us. What is this but taxing us at a certain sum, and leaving to us only the manner of raising it? How is this mode more tolerable than the Stamp Act? Would that act have appeared more pleasing to Americans, if being ordered thereby to raise the sum total of the taxes, the mighty privilege had been left to them, of saying how much should be paid for an instrument of writing on paper, and how much for another on parchment?

An act of parliament commanding us to do a certain thing, if it has any validity, is a tax

upon us for the expense that accrues in complying with it, and for this reason, I believe, every colony on the continent that chose to give a mark of their respect for Great Britain in complying with the act relating to the troops cautiously avoided the mention of that act, lest their conduct should be attributed to its supposed obligation.

The matter being thus stated, the assembly of New York either had, or had not, a right to refuse submission to that act. If they had, and I imagine no American will say they had not, then the parliament had no right to compel them to execute it. If they had not that right, they had no right to punish them for not executing it; and therefore had no right to suspend their legislation, which is a punishment. In fact, if the people of New York cannot be legally taxed but by their own representatives, they cannot be legally deprived of the privileges of making laws, only for insisting on that exclusive privilege of taxation. If they may be legally deprived in such a case of the privilege of making laws, why may they not, with equal reason, be deprived of every other privilege? Or why may not every colony be treated in the same manner, when any of them shall dare to deny their assent to any impositions that shall be directed? Or what signifies the repeal of the Stamp Act, if these colonies are to lose their other privileges, by not tamely surrendering that of taxation?

There is one consideration arising from the suspicion, which is not generally attended to, but shows its importance very clearly. It was not necessary that this suspension should be caused by an act of parliament. The crown might have restrained the governor of New York even from calling the assembly together, by its prerogative in the royal governments. This step, I suppose, would have been taken if the conduct of the assembly of New York had been regarded as an act of disobedience to the crown alone. But it is regarded as an act of "disobedience to the authority of the *British legislature*." This gives the suspension a consequence vastly more affecting. It is a parliamentary assertion of the supreme authority of the British legislature over these colonies in the point of taxation, and is intended to *compel* New York

unto a submission to that authority. It seems therefore to me as much a violation of the liberty of the people of that province, and consequently of all these colonies, as if the parliament had sent a number of regiments to be quartered upon them till they should comply. For it is evident that the suspension is meant as a compulsion, and the method of compelling is totally indifferent. It is indeed probable that the sight of redcoats and the beating of drums would have been most alarming, because people are generally more influenced by their eyes and ears than by their reason. But whoever seriously considers the matter must perceive that a dreadful stroke is aimed at the liberty of these colonies. I say of these colonies, for the cause of *one* is the cause of *all*. If the parliament may lawfully deprive New York of any of its rights, it may deprive any, or all the other colonies of their rights; and nothing can possibly so much encourage such attempts as a mutual inattention to the interest of each other. *To divide and thus to destroy* is the first political maxim in attacking those who are powerful by their union. He certainly is not a wise man who folds his arms and reposeth himself at home, seeing with unconcern the flames that have invaded his neighbor's house, without any endeavors to extinguish them. When Mr. Hampden's ship-money cause for three shillings and fourpence was tried, all the people of England, with anxious expectation, interested themselves in the important decision; and when the slightest point touching the freedom of a single colony is agitated, I earnestly wish that all the rest may with equal ardor support their sister. Very much may be said on this subject, but I hope more at present is unnecessary.

With concern I have observed that two assemblies of this province have sat and adjourned, without taking any notice of this act. It may perhaps be asked, what would have been proper for them to do? I am by no means fond of inflammatory measures. I detest them. I should be sorry that any thing should be done which might justly displease our sovereign or our mother country. But a firm, modest exertion of a free spirit should never be wanting on public occasions. It ap-

pears to me that it would have been sufficient for the assembly to have ordered our agents to represent to the King's ministers their sense of the suspending act, and to pray for its repeal. Thus we should have borne our testimony against it; and might therefore reasonably expect that on a like occasion, we might receive the same assistance from the other colonies

*Concordia res parvae crescunt.*<sup>1</sup>

1767

#### LETTER III

#### [A Firm but Peaceable Resistance]

I rejoice to find that my two former letters to you have been generally received with so much favor by such of you whose sentiments I have had an opportunity of knowing. Could you look into my heart, you would instantly perceive an ardent affection for your persons, a zealous attachment to your interests, a lively resentment of every insult and injury offered to your honor or happiness, and an inflexible resolution to assert your rights to the utmost of my weak power, to be the only motives that have engaged me to address you. I am no further concerned in anything affecting America than any one of you, and when liberty leaves it, I can quit it much more conveniently than most of you but while Divine Providence, that gave me existence in a land of freedom, permits my head to think, my lips to speak, and my hand to move, I shall so highly and gratefully value the blessing received, as to take care that my silence and inactivity shall not give my implied assent to any act degrading my brethren and myself from the birthright wherewith heaven itself "hath made us free."

Sorry I am to learn that there are some few persons [who] shake their heads with solemn motion, and pretend to wonder what can be the meaning of these letters. "Great Britain," they say, "is too powerful to contend with; she is determined to oppress us; it is in vain to speak of right on one side, when there is power on the other, when we are strong enough to resist, we shall attempt it; but now we are not strong enough, and therefore we had better

<sup>1</sup> "By joint action small states increase their power."

be quiet; it signifies nothing to convince us that our rights are invaded, when we cannot defend them; and if we should get into riots and tumults about the late act, it will only bring down heavier displeasure upon us."

What can such men design? What do their grave observations amount to but this—"that these colonies, totally regardless of their liberties, should commit them, with humble resignation, to chance, time, and the tender mercies of ministers."

Are these men ignorant that usurpations, which might have been successfully opposed at first, acquire strength by continuance, and thus become irresistible? Do they condemn the conduct of these colonies, concerning the Stamp Act? Or have they forgot its successful issue? Ought the colonies at that time, instead of acting as they did, to have trusted for relief to the fortuitous events of futurity? If it is needless "to speak of rights" now, it was as needless then. If the behavior of the colonies was prudent and glorious then, and successful too, it will be equally prudent and glorious to act in the same manner now, if our rights are equally invaded, and may be as successful. Therefore it becomes necessary to enquire, whether "our rights are invaded." To talk of "defending" them, as if they could be no otherwise "defended" than by arms, is as much out of the way as if a man having a choice of several roads to reach his journey's end, should prefer the worst, for no other reason than because it is the worst.

As to "riots and tumults," the gentlemen who are so apprehensive of them are much mistaken if they think that grievances cannot be redressed without such assistance.

I will now tell the gentlemen what is "the meaning of these letters." The meaning of them is, to convince the people of these colonies that they are at this moment exposed to the most imminent dangers, and to persuade them immediately, vigorously, and unanimously, to exert themselves in the most firm but most peaceable manner for obtaining relief.

The cause of liberty is a cause of too much dignity to be sullied by turbulence and tumult. It ought to be maintained in a manner suitable to her nature. Those who engage in it should

breathes a sedate yet fervent spirit, animating them to actions of prudence, justice, modesty, bravery, humanity, and magnanimity.

To such a wonderful degree were the ancient Spartans, as brave and as free a people as ever existed, inspired by this happy temperature of soul that, rejecting even in their battles the use of trumpets and other instruments for exciting heat and rage, they marched up to scenes of havoc and horror, with the sound of flutes, to the tunes of which their steps kept pace—"exhibiting," as Plutarch says, "at once a terrible and delightful sight, and proceeding with a deliberate valor, full of hope and good assurance, as if some divinity had insensibly assisted them."

I hope, my dear countrymen, that you will, in every colony, be upon your guard against those who may at any time endeavor to stir you up, under pretense of patriotism, to any measures disrespectful to our sovereign and our mother country. Hot, rash, disorderly proceedings injure the reputation of a people as to wisdom, valor, and virtue, without procuring them the least benefit. I pray God that he may be pleased to inspire you and your posterity to the latest ages with that spirit of which I have an idea, but find a difficulty to express. To express in the best manner I can, I mean a spirit that shall so guide you that it will be impossible to determine whether an American's character is most distinguishable for his loyalty to his sovereign, his duty to his mother country, his love of freedom, or his affection for his native soil

Every government, at some time or other, falls into wrong measures, these may proceed from mistake or passion. But every such measure does not dissolve the obligation between the governors and the governed, the mistake may be corrected, the passion may pass over.

It is the duty of the governed to endeavor to rectify the mistake and appease the passion. They have not at first any other right than to represent their grievances and to pray for redress, unless an emergency is so pressing as not to allow time for receiving an answer to their applications, which rarely happens. If their applications are disregarded, then that kind of opposition becomes justifiable, which can be

made without breaking the laws, or disturbing the public peace. This consists in the prevention of the oppressors reaping advantage from their oppressions, and not in their punishment. For experience may teach what reason did not; and harsh methods cannot be proper, till milder ones have failed.

If at length it becomes undoubted that inveterate resolution is formed to annihilate the liberties of the governed, the English history affords frequent examples of resistance by force. What particular circumstances will in any future case justify such resistance can never be ascertained till they happen. Perhaps it may be allowable to say, generally, that it never can be justifiable until the people are *fully convinced* that any further submission will be destructive to their happiness.

When the appeal is made to the sword, highly probable it is that the punishment will exceed the offense; and the calamities attending on war outweigh those preceding it. These considerations of justice and prudence will always have great influence with good and wise men

To these reflections on this subject, it remains to be added, and ought forever to be remembered that resistance in the case of colonies against their mother country is extremely different from the resistance of a people against their prince. A nation may change their king or race of kings, and retaining their ancient form of government, be gainers by changing. Thus Great Britain, under the illustrious house of Brunswick, a house that seems to flourish for the happiness of mankind, has found a felicity unknown in the reigns of the Stuarts. But if once we are separated from our mother country, what new form of government shall we accept, or when shall we find another Britain to supply our loss? Torn from the body to which we are united by religion, liberty, laws, affections, relations, language, and commerce, we must bleed at every vein.

In truth, the prosperity of these provinces is founded in their dependence on Great Britain; and when she returns to "her old good humor and old good nature," as Lord Clarendon expresses it, I hope they will always esteem it their duty and interest, as it most

certainly will be, to promote her welfare by all the means in their power.

We cannot act with too much caution in our disputes. Anger produces anger; and differences that might be accommodated by kind and respectful behavior may by imprudence be changed to an incurable rage.

In quarrels between countries, as well as in those between individuals, when they have risen to a certain height, the first cause of dis-  
 sension is no longer remembered, the minds of the parties being wholly engaged in recollecting and resenting the mutual expressions of their dislike. When feuds have reached that fatal point, all considerations of reason and equity vanish, and a blind fury governs, or rather confounds all things. A people no longer regards their interest but the gratification of their wrath. The sway of the Cleons and Clodiuses, the designing and detestable flatterers of the prevailing passion, becomes confirmed.

Wise and good men in vain oppose the storm and may think themselves fortunate if, endeavoring to preserve their ungrateful fellow citizens, they do not ruin themselves. Their prudence will be called baseness, their moderation, guilt, and if their virtue does not lead them to destruction, as that of many other great and excellent persons has done, they may survive to receive from their expiring country the mournful glory of her acknowledgement that their counsels, if regarded, would have saved her.

The constitutional modes of obtaining relief

are those which I would wish to see pursued on the present occasion; that is, by petitioning of our assemblies or, where they are not permitted to meet, of the people to the powers that can afford us relief.

We have an excellent prince, in whose good dispositions towards us we may confide. We have a generous, sensible, and humane nation, to whom we may apply. They may be deceived, they may, by artful men, be provoked to anger against us; but I cannot yet believe they will be cruel or unjust, or that their anger will be implacable. Let us behave like dutiful children, who have received unmerited blows from a beloved parent. Let us complain to our parents, but let our complaints speak at the same time the language of affliction and veneration. If, however, it shall happen, by an unfortunate course of affairs, that our applications to his Majesty and the parliament for the redress, prove ineffectual, let us then take another step by withholding from Great Britain all the advantages she has been used to receive from us. Then let us try if our ingenuity, industry, and frugality will not give weight to our remonstrances. Let us all be united with one spirit in one cause. Let us invent; let us work; let us save, let us at the same time, keep up our claims and unceasingly repeat our complaints, but above all, let us implore the protection of that infinite good and gracious Being, "by whom kings reign and princes decree justice."

*Nil desperandum.*

"There is no reason for despairing."

1767

### THE LIBERTY SONG

COME join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
 And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call,

No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,

Nor stain with dishonor America's name  
 In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll live;

Our purses are ready,  
 Steady, friends, steady,

Not as *slaves*, but as *freemen* our money we'll give.

Our worthy forefathers—let's give them a cheer—

To climates unknown did courageously steer,  
 Thro' oceans to deserts, for freedom they came,  
 And, dying, bequeath'd us their freedom and fame

Their generous bosoms all dangers despis'd,  
 So highly, so wisely, their birthrights they priz'd,

We'll keep what they gave, we will piously keep,

Nor frustrate their toils on the land or the deep.



The Tree their own hands had to Liberty  
 rear'd,  
 They lived to behold growing strong and  
 rever'd,  
 With rapture then cried, "Now our wishes  
 we gain,  
 For our children shall gather the fruits of our  
 pain." 20

How sweet are the labors that freemen endure,  
 That they shall enjoy all the profit, secure,—  
 No more such sweet labors Americans know,  
 If Britons shall reap what Americans sow.

Swarms of placemen and pensioners soon will  
 appear,  
 Like locusts deforming the charms of the year:  
 Suns vainly will rise, showers vainly descend,  
 If we are to drudge for what others shall spend

Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
 By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall; 30  
 In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,  
 For Heaven approves of each generous deed.

All ages shall speak with amaze and applause,  
 Of the courage we'll show in support of our  
 laws;

To die we can bear—but to serve we disdain,  
 For shame is to freemen more dreadful than  
 pain.

Thus bumper I crown for our sovereign's  
 health,

And thus for Britannia's glory and wealth;  
 That wealth, and that glory immortal may be,  
 If she is but just, and we are but free. 40  
 In freedom we're born, &c.

1768

## 1751 -- John Trumbull -- 1831

BORN OF a distinguished Connecticut family and educated by his mother, a cousin of Jonathan Edwards, the precocious John Trumbull was enabled to pass the Yale entrance examinations at the age of seven but forbore to enter until he was thirteen. As an intellectual among the undergraduates, he objected to the antiquated content of the eighteenth-century American college curriculum and the neglect of the study of literature, especially the English writers. With his friends Timothy Dwight and David Humphreys, he cultivated the writing of verse, and before graduating in 1767 had acquired a local reputation for formal neo-classical lyric and moralizing pieces and for somewhat scandalous satirical skits. As a graduate student for three years at Yale, he carried on two series of periodical essays in Boston and New Haven newspapers. During another year as a tutor, he wrote his vigorous satire on collegiate education, *The Progress of Dulness* (1772-73), thrice reprinted. In this he adopted the spirited ribald tetrameter couplets of Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, which largely through his example became for a time the accepted medium of American verse satire. Admitted to the bar in 1773 and established in the law office of John Adams at Boston on the eve of the Revolution, he seemed on the threshold of a brilliant career. He was by nature cautious and conservative, however, and after contributing his turgid and bombastic patriotic piece, *An Elegy on the Times*, retired to practice law in New Haven, soon removing to the greater

safety of Hartford. At the urging of friends that he exert his talents in the Revolutionary cause, he published in 1775 the first two parts of *M'Fingal*, the narrative of a blundering Scottish Tory squire, tarred and feathered by indignant patriots. The work was not completed until seven years later. In its finished form it was very popular, passing through more than thirty reprints within sixty years. At Hartford he was recognized as a leader by the group of Connecticut wits and poets but did nothing more to sustain his reputation. He was a prominent jurist and officeholder until 1819, and at seventy-five went west to live with a daughter in Detroit, where he died in 1831. Trumbull fancied himself a poet of imaginative gifts, but was an excellent example of the brilliance and limitations of the eighteenth-century rational observer, wit, and satirist. In the later cantos of *M'Fingal* he already reveals the essential aristocratic conservatism of the Federalist reacting to the violence of revolutionary enthusiasm.

Trumbull's works include the *Meddler* essays in the *Boston Chronicle* (*passim*, 1769-1771), the *Correspondent* series in the *Connecticut Journal* (*passim*, 1770 and 1773), *An Elegy on the Death of Mr. Buckingham St. John* (1771), *The Progress of Dulness* (1772-1773); *An Elegy on the Times* (1774), and *M'Fingal* (Cantos I and II, 1775, complete, 1782). Most of the poems were included in the Hartford Edition of his works (1820), best studied in the *Colonnade* reprint, Vol. XIV, 287-538 (1922). *The Progress of Dulness* and *M'Fingal* are included, with an introduction, in V. L. Parrington's *The Connecticut Wits* (1926).

The standard biography is that of Alexander Cowie, *John Trumbull, Connecticut Wit* (1936). The 1820 *Poems* contains a memoir. See also L. Grey, "John Adams and John Trumbull in the 'Boston Cycle,'" *New England Quarterly*, IV, 509-514 (July, 1931), V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927), I, 248-252, J. H. Trumbull, *The Origin of M'Fingal* (1868), H. A. Beers, *The Connecticut Wits and Other Essays* (1920); and A. Cowie, "John Trumbull as a Critic of Poetry," *New England Quarterly*, XI, 773-793 (Dec., 1938).

#### From THE PROGRESS OF DULNESS

##### [*The Career of Tom Brainless*]

"OUR Tom has grown a sturdy boy;  
His progress fills my heart with joy,  
A steady soul, that yields to rule,  
And quite ingenious too, at school.  
Our master says, (I'm sure he's right,)  
There's not a lad in town so bright,  
He'll cipher bravely, write and read,  
And say his catechism and creed,  
And scorns to hesitate or falter  
In Primer, Spelling-book or Psalter. 10  
Hard work indeed, he does not love it;  
His genius is too much above it.  
Give him a good substantial teacher,  
I'll lay<sup>1</sup> he'd make a special preacher.

<sup>1</sup> wager

I've loved good learning all my life;  
We'll send the lad to college, wife."

Thus sway'd by fond and sightless passion,  
His parents hold a consultation;  
If on their couch, or round their fire,  
I need not tell, nor you enquire 20

The point's agreed; the boy well pleased,  
From country cares and labor eased;  
No more to rise by break of day  
To drive home cows, or deal out hay;  
To work no more in snow or hail,  
And blow his fingers o'er the flail,  
Or mid the toils of harvest sweat  
Beneath the summer's sultry heat,  
Serene, he bids the farm good-bye,  
And quits the plow without a sigh. 30  
Propitious to their constant friend,  
The powers of idleness attend.

So to the priest in form he goes,  
 Prepared to study and to doze.  
 The parson, in his youth before,  
 Had run the same dull progress o'er;  
 His sole concern to see with care  
 His church and farm in good repair.  
 His skill in tongues, that once he knew,  
 Had bid him long, a last adieu, 40  
 Away his Latin rules had fled,  
 And Greek had vanish'd from his head.

Then view our youth with grammar teasing,  
 Untaught in meaning, sense or reason;  
 Of knowledge ere he gain his fill, he  
 Must diet long on husks of Lily,<sup>1</sup>  
 Drudge on for weary months in vain,  
 By mem'ry's strength, and dunt of brain,  
 From thence to murd'ring Virgil's verse,  
 And construing Tully<sup>2</sup> into farce, 50  
 Or lab'ring with his grave preceptor,  
 In Greek to blunder o'er a chapter.  
 The Latin Testament affords  
 The needed help of ready words;  
 At hand the Dictionary laid,  
 Gives up its page in frequent aid;  
 Hard by, the Lexicon and Grammar,  
 Those helps of mem'ry when they stammer;  
 The lesson's short, the priest contented,  
 His task to hear is sooner ended. 60  
 He lets his mind his own concerns,  
 Then tells his parents how he learns.

Two years thus spent in gathering knowl-  
 edge,  
 The lad sets forth r'unlaid at college,  
 While down his sire and priest attend him,  
 To introduce and recommend him;  
 Or if detain'd, a letter's sent  
 Of much apocryphal content,  
 To set him forth, how dull soever,  
 As very learn'd and very clever; 70  
 A genius of the first emulsion,  
 With burning love for erudition,  
 So studious he'll outwatch the moon  
 And think the planets set too soon  
 He had but little time to fit in;  
 Examination too must frighten.  
 Depend upon't he must do well,  
 He knows much more than he can tell;  
 Admire him, and in little space  
 He'll beat his rivals in the race; 80

<sup>1</sup> Lily's was the only Latin Grammar then in use.  
 [Trumbull's note]    <sup>2</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero

His father's incomes are but small,  
 He comes now if he comes at all.

So said, so done, at college now  
 He enters well, no matter how;  
 New scenes awhile his fancy please,  
 But all must yield to love of ease.  
 In the same round condemn'd each day,  
 To study, read, recite and pray;  
 To make his hour of business double—  
 He can't endure th' increasing trouble; 90  
 And finds at length, as times grow pressing,  
 All plagues are easier than his lesson.  
 With sleepy eyes and count'nance heavy,  
 With much excuse of *non paravi*,<sup>1</sup>  
 Much absence, *tardes* and *egresses*,<sup>1</sup>  
 The college-evil on him seizes.  
 Then ev'ry book, which ought to please,  
 Stirs up the seeds of dire disease;  
 Greek spoils his eyes, the print's so fine,  
 Grown dim with study, or with wine, 100  
 Of Tully's Latin much afraid,  
 Each page, he calls the doctor's aid,  
 While geometry, with lines so crooked,  
 Sprains all his wits to overlook it.  
 His sickness puts on every name,  
 Its cause and uses still the same;  
 'Tis tooth-ache, colic, gout or stone,<sup>2</sup>  
 With phases various as the moon,  
 But though through all the body spread,  
 Still makes its capital seat, the head. 110  
 In all diseases, 'tis expected,  
 The weakest parts be most infected  
 Kind head-ache hail thou blest disease,  
 The friend of idleness and ease;  
 Who mud the still and dreary bound  
 Where college walls her sons surround,  
 In spite of fears, in justice' spite,  
 Assumest o'er laws dispensing right,  
 Sett'st from his task the blunderer free,  
 Excused by dulness and by thee. 120  
 Thy vot'ries bid a bold defiance  
 To all the calls and threats of science,  
 Slight learning human and divine,  
 And hear no prayers, and fear no fine.  
 And yet how oft the studious gain,  
 The dulness of a letter'd brain;

<sup>1</sup> *Non paravi*, I have not prepared for recitation—an  
 excuse commonly given, *tardes* and *egresses* were terms  
 used at college, for coming in late and going out before  
 the conclusion of service. [Trumbull's note]    <sup>2</sup> gall-  
 stones

Despising such low things the while,  
 As English grammar, phrase and style,  
 Despising ev'ry nacer art,  
 That aids the tongue, or mends the heart; 130  
 Read ancient authors o'er in vain,  
 Nor taste one beauty they contain,  
 Humbly on trust accept the sense,  
 But deal for words at vast expense;  
 Search well how every term must vary  
 From Lexicon to Dictionary;  
 And plodding on in one dull tone,  
 Gain ancient tongues and lose their own,  
 Bid every graceful charm defiance,  
 And woo the skeleton of science. 140

Come ye, who finer arts despise,  
 And scoff at verse as heathen lies;  
 In all the pride of dulness rage  
 At Pope, or Milton's deathless page,  
 Or stung by truth's deep-searching line,  
 Rave ev'n at rhymes as low as mine,  
 Say ye, who boast the name of wise,  
 Wherein substantial learning lies.  
 Is it, superb in classic lore,  
 To speak what Homer spoke before, 150  
 To write the language Tully wrote,  
 The style, the cadence and the note?  
 Is there a charm in sounds of Greek,  
 No language else can learn to speak,  
 That cures distemper'd brains at once  
 Like Pliny's rhymes for broken bones?<sup>1</sup>  
 Is there a spirit found in Latin,  
 That must evap'rate in translating?  
 And say are sense and genius bound  
 To any vehicles of sound? 160  
 Can knowledge never reach the brains,  
 Unless convey'd in ancient strains?  
 While Homer sets before your eyes  
 Achilles' rage, Ulysses' lies,  
 Th' amours of Jove in masquerade,  
 And Mars entrapp'd by Phoebus' aid;  
 While Virgil sings, in verses grave,  
 His lovers meeting in a cave,  
 His ships turn'd nymphs, in pagan fables,  
 And how the Trojans eat their tables, 170  
 While half this learning but displays  
 The follies of the former days,  
 And for our linguists, fairly try them,  
 A tutor'd parrot might defy them.

Go to the vulgar—'tis decreed,

<sup>1</sup> Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.) wrote verse treatises on anthropology

There you must preach and write or plead;  
 Broach every curious Latin phrase  
 From Tully down to Lily's days:  
 All this your hearers have no share in,  
 Bate but their laughing and their staring. 180  
 Interpreters must pass between,  
 To let them know a word you mean.

Yet could you reach that lofty tongue  
 Which Plato wrote and Homer sung;  
 Or ape the Latin verse and scanning,  
 Like Vida, Cowley, or Buchanan;  
 Or bear ten phrase-books in your head;  
 Yet know, these languages are dead,  
 And nothing e'er by death was seen  
 Improved in beauty, strength or men, 190  
 Whether the sexton use his spade,  
 Or sorcerer wake the parted shade.  
 Think how would Tully stare or smile  
 At these wan spectres of his style,  
 Or Horace in his jovial way  
 Ask what these babblers mean to say  
 Let modern Logic next arise  
 With newborn light to glad your eyes,  
 Enthroned on high in Reason's chair,  
 Usurp her name, assume her air, 200  
 Give laws, to think with quaint precision,  
 And deal out loads of definition.

Sense, in dull syllogisms confined,  
 Scorns these weak trammels of the mind,  
 Nor needs t'enquire by logic's leave  
 What to reject and what receive;  
 Throws all her trifling bulwarks down,  
 Expatiates free, while from her frown  
 Alike the dunce and pedant smart,  
 The fool of nature, or of art. 210

On books of Rhetoric turn your hopes,  
 Unawed by figures or by tropes.<sup>1</sup>  
 What silly rules in pomp appear!  
 What mighty nothings stun the ear!  
*Athousmos, Mesoteleuton,* A  
*Symploce and Paregmenon!* 2 J  
 Thus, in such sounds high rumbling, rum'd/W  
 The names of jingle and of pun; JgnorifT  
 Thus shall your pathos melt the hearts to O  
 And shame the Greek and Roman shooog off  
 Say then, where solid learning lies abolqzJ  
 And what the toil that makes the wisdom evitJ  
 Is it by mathematic's aid, elusit nedi nialqxJ  
 To count the worlds in light arraisiw dassT

<sup>1</sup> Figures of speech / 1. *metonymy*, 2. *metonymy*, 3. *metonymy*, 4. *metonymy*, 5. *metonymy*, 6. *metonymy*, 7. *metonymy*, 8. *metonymy*, 9. *metonymy*, 10. *metonymy*, 11. *metonymy*, 12. *metonymy*, 13. *metonymy*, 14. *metonymy*, 15. *metonymy*, 16. *metonymy*, 17. *metonymy*, 18. *metonymy*, 19. *metonymy*, 20. *metonymy*, 21. *metonymy*, 22. *metonymy*, 23. *metonymy*, 24. *metonymy*, 25. *metonymy*, 26. *metonymy*, 27. *metonymy*, 28. *metonymy*, 29. *metonymy*, 30. *metonymy*, 31. *metonymy*, 32. *metonymy*, 33. *metonymy*, 34. *metonymy*, 35. *metonymy*, 36. *metonymy*, 37. *metonymy*, 38. *metonymy*, 39. *metonymy*, 40. *metonymy*, 41. *metonymy*, 42. *metonymy*, 43. *metonymy*, 44. *metonymy*, 45. *metonymy*, 46. *metonymy*, 47. *metonymy*, 48. *metonymy*, 49. *metonymy*, 50. *metonymy*, 51. *metonymy*, 52. *metonymy*, 53. *metonymy*, 54. *metonymy*, 55. *metonymy*, 56. *metonymy*, 57. *metonymy*, 58. *metonymy*, 59. *metonymy*, 60. *metonymy*, 61. *metonymy*, 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To know each star that lifts its eye,  
To sparkle in the midnight sky?  
Say ye, who draw the curious line  
Between the useful and the fine,  
How little can this noble art  
Its aid in human things impart,  
Or give to life a cheerful ray,  
And force our pains and cares away.

Is it to know what'er was done  
Above the circle of the sun?  
Is it to lift the active mind  
Beyond the bounds by heaven assign'd;  
And leave our little world at home,  
Through realms of entry to roam;  
Attempt the secrets dark to scan,  
Eternal wisdom hid from man;  
And make religion but the sign  
In din of battle when to join?

Vain man, to madness still a prey,  
Thy space a point, thy life a day,  
A feeble worm, that aim'st to stride  
In all the foppery of pride!  
The glimmering lamp of reason's ray  
Was given to guide thy darksome way.  
Why wilt thou spread thy insect wings,  
And strive to reach sublimer things?  
Thy doubts confess, thy blindness own,  
Nor vex thy thoughts with scenes unknown  
Indulgent heaven to man below,  
Hath all explain'd we need to know,  
Hath clearly taught enough to prove  
Content below, and bliss above  
Thy boastful wish how proud and vain,  
While heaven forbids the vaunting strain!  
For metaphysics rightly shown  
But teach how little can be known  
Though quibbles still maintain their station,  
Conjecture serves for demonstration,  
Armies of pens draw forth to fight,  
And \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\* write.<sup>1</sup>

Oh! might I live to see that day,  
When sense shall point to youths their way;  
Through every maze of science guide;  
O'er education's laws preside,  
The gods retain, with just discerning  
Explode the quackeries of learning;  
Give authors ~~and~~ their real due,  
Explain their faults, and beauties too;  
Teach ~~when to imitate~~, and mend,

<sup>1</sup> ~~And \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\* write.~~ writers are indicated by these asterisks.

And point their uses and their end.  
Then bright philosophy would shine,  
And ethics teach the laws divine;  
Our youths might learn each nobler art,  
That shews a passage to the heart;  
From ancient languages well known  
Transfuse new beauties to our own;  
With taste and fancy well refin'd,  
Where moral rapture warms the mind,  
From schools dismiss'd, with lib'ral hand,  
Spread useful learning o'er the land;  
And bid the eastern world admire  
Our rising worth, and bright'ning fire.

But while through fancy's realms we roam,  
The main concern is left at home;  
Return'd, our hero still we find  
The same, as blundering and as blind.

Four years at college dozed away  
In sleep, and slothfulness and play,  
Too dull for vice, with clearest conscience,  
Charged with no fault but that of nonsense,  
And nonsense long, with serious air,  
Has wander'd unmolested there,  
He passes trial, fair and free,  
And takes in form his first degree.

A scholar see him now commence<sup>1</sup>  
Without the aid of books or sense;  
For passing college cures the brain,  
Like mills to grind men young again.  
The scholar-dress, that once array'd him,  
The charm, *Admitto te ad gradum*,<sup>2</sup>  
With touch of parchment can refine,  
And make the veriest coxcomb shine,  
Confer the gift of tongues at once,  
And fill with sense the vacant dunce.  
So kingly crowns contain quintessence  
Of worship, dignity and presence,  
Give learning, genius, virtue, worth,  
Wit, valor, wisdom, and so forth;  
Hide the bald pate, and cover o'er  
The cap of folly worn before

Our hero's wit and learning now may  
Be proved by token of diploma,  
Of that diploma, which with speed  
He learns to construe and to read,  
And stalks abroad with conscious stride,  
In all the airs of pedant pride,

<sup>1</sup> graduate, originally, enter upon candidacy for a higher degree. <sup>2</sup> *Admitto te ad gradum*, "I admit you to a degree"; part of the words used in conferring the honors of college. [Trumbull's note]

With passport sign'd for wit and knowledge,  
And current under seal of college.

Few months now past, he sees with pain  
His purse as empty as his brain;  
His father leaves him then to fate,  
And throws him off, as useless weight,  
But gives him good advice, to teach  
A school at first and then to preach.

Thou reason'st well; it must be so;  
For nothing else thy son can do. 330  
As thieves of old, t'avoid the halter,  
Took refuge in the holy altar,  
Oft dulness flying from disgrace  
Finds safety in that sacred place;  
There boldly rears his head, or rests  
Secure from ridicule or jests;  
Where dreaded satire may not dare  
Offend his wig's<sup>1</sup> extremest hair;  
Where scripture sanctifies his strains,  
And reverence ludes the want of brains 340

Next see our youth at school appear,  
Procured for forty pounds a year;  
His ragged regiment round assemble,  
Taught, not to read, but fear and tremble  
Before him, rods prepare his way,  
Those dreaded antidotes to play.  
Then throned aloft in elbow chair,  
With solemn face and awful air,  
He tries, with ease and unconcern,  
To teach what ne'er himself could learn; 350  
Gives law and punishment alone,  
Judge, jury, bailiff, all in one,  
Holds all good learning must depend  
Upon his rod's extremest end,  
Whose great electric virtue's such,  
Each genius brightens at the touch,  
With threats and blows, incitements pressing,  
Drives on his lads to learn each lesson,  
Thinks flogging cures all moral ills,  
And breaks their heads to break their wills. 360

The year is done, he takes his leave,  
The children smile; the parents grieve,  
And seek again, their school to keep,  
One just as good and just as cheap.

Now to some priest, that's famed for  
teaching,  
He goes to learn the art of preaching;  
And settles down with earnest zeal

Sermons to study, and to steal.  
Six months from all the world retires  
To kindle up his cover'd fires; 370  
Learns, with nice art, to make with ease  
The scripture speak whate'er he please;  
With judgment, unperceived to quote  
What Poole explain'd, or Henry wrote;  
To give the gospel new editions,  
Split doctrines into propositions,  
Draw motives, uses, inferences,  
And torture words in thousand senses;  
Learn the grave style and goodly phrase,  
Safe handed down from Cromwell's days, 380  
And shun, with anxious care, the while,  
The infection of a modern style,  
Or on the wings of folly fly  
Aloft in metaphysic sky,  
The system of the world explain,  
Till night and chaos come again,  
Denide what old divines can say,  
Point out to heaven a nearer way,  
Explode all known establish'd rules,  
Affirm our fathers all were fools, 390  
The present age is growing wise,  
But wisdom in her cradle lies,  
Late, like Minerva, born and bred,  
Not from a Jove's, but scribbler's head,  
While thousand youths their homage lend her,  
And nursing fathers rock and tend her

Round him much manuscript is spread,  
Extracts from living works, and dead,  
Themes, sermons, plans of controversy,  
That hack and mangle without mercy, 400  
And whence to glad the reader's eyes,  
The future dialogue shall rise<sup>1</sup>

At length, matured the grand design,  
He stalks abroad, a grave divine  
Meanwhile, from every distant seat,  
At stated time the clergy meet.  
Our hero comes, his sermon reads,  
Explains the doctrine of his creeds,  
A licence gains to preach and pray,  
And makes his bow and goes his way. 410

What though his wits could ne'er dispense  
One page of grammar, or of sense,  
What though his learning be so slight,  
He scarcely knows to spell or write,  
What though his skull be cudgel-proof  
He's orthodox, and that's enough

<sup>1</sup> A wig was then an essential part of the clerical dress. None appeared in the pulpit without it. [Trumbull's note.]

<sup>1</sup> Writing in dialogue was then a fashionable mode among the controversial divines. [Trumbull's note.]

Perhaps with genius we'd dispense;  
But sure we look at least for sense.

Ye fathers of our church, attend  
The serious counsels of a friend, 430  
Whose utmost wish, in nobler ways,  
Your sacred dignity to raise.  
Though blunt the style, the truths set down  
Ye can't deny—though some may frown.

Yes, there are men, nor these a few,  
The foes of virtue and of you,  
Who, nurtured in the scorner's school,  
Make vice their trade, and sin by rule,  
Who deem it courage heav'n to brave,  
And wit, to scoff at all that's grave, 430  
Vent stolen jests, with strange grimaces,  
From folly's book of common-places;  
While mid the simple throng around  
Each kindred blockhead greets the sound,  
And, like electric fire, at once,  
The laugh is caught from dunce to dunce.

The deist's scoffs ye may despise;  
Within yourselves your danger lies,  
For who would wish, neglecting rule,  
To aid the triumphs of a fool? 440  
From heaven at first your order came,  
From heaven received its sacred name,  
Indulged to man, to point the way,  
That leads from darkness up to day.  
Your highborn dignity attend,  
And view your origin and end

While human souls are all your care,  
By warnings, counsels, preaching, prayer,  
In bands of Christian friendship join'd,  
Where pure affection warms the mind, 450  
While each performs the pious race,  
Nor dulness e'er usurps a place;  
No vice shall brave your awful test,  
Nor folly dare to broach the jest,  
Each waiting eye shall humbly bend,  
And reverence on your steps attend

But when each point of serious weight  
Is torn with wrangling and debate,  
When truth, mid rage of dire divisions,  
Is left, to fight for definitions, 460  
And fools assume your sacred place,  
It threatens your order with disgrace,  
Bids genius from your seats withdraw,  
And seek the pert, loquacious law;  
Or deign in physc's<sup>1</sup> paths to rank,  
With every quack and mountebank;

<sup>1</sup> medicine

Or in the ways of trade content,  
Plod ledgers o'er of cent. per cent.

While in your seats so sacred, whence 470  
We look for piety and sense,  
Pert dulness raves in school-boy style,  
Your friends must blush, your foes will smile;  
While men who teach the glorious way,  
Where heaven unfolds celestial day,  
Assume the task sublime, to bring  
The message of th' Eternal King,  
Disgrace those honors they receive,  
And want that sense they aim to give.

Now in the desk, with solemn air,  
Our hero makes his audience stare; 480  
Asserts with all dogmatic boldness,  
Where impudence is yoked to dulness;  
Reads o'er his notes with halting pace,  
Mask'd in the stiffness of his face,  
With gestures such as might become  
Those statues once that spoke at Rome,  
Or Livy's ox, that to the state<sup>1</sup>  
Declared the oracles of fate,  
In awkward tones, nor said, nor sung,  
Slow rumbling o'er the falt'ring tongue, 490  
Two hours his drawing speech holds on,  
And names it preaching, when he's done.

With roving tired, he fixes down  
For life, in some unsettled town  
People and priest full well agree,  
For why—they know no more than he  
Vast tracts of unknown land he gains,  
Better than those the moon contains,  
There deals in preaching and in prayer,  
And starves on sixty pounds a year, 500  
And culls his texts, and tills his farm,  
Does little good, and little harm,  
On Sunday, in his best array,  
Deals forth the dulness of the day,  
And while above he spends his breath,  
The yawning audience nod beneath.

Thus glib-tongued Merc'ry in his hand  
Stretch'd forth the sleep-compelling wand,  
Each eye in endless doze to keep—  
The God of speaking, and of sleep 510

### [Miss Harriet Sumner]

Part II deals with the education and fortunes of  
Dick Hairbrain, a fop, and Part III with those of a  
coquette. This concluding section unifies the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Bos locutus est* Livy *History* [Trumbull's note.]

work by having Harriet, a shallow, frivolous flirt, fall desperately in love with Dick Hairbrain, who jilts her Harriet eventually marries Tom Brainless

Poor Harriet now hath had her day;  
No more the beaux confess her away,  
New beauties push her from the stage;  
She trembles at th' approach of age,  
And starts to view the alter'd face,  
That wrinkles at her in her glass:  
So Satan, in the monk's tradition,  
Fear'd, when he met his apparition.

At length her name each coxcomb cancels  
From standing lists of toasts and angels, 10  
And slighted where she shone before,  
A grace and goddess now no more,  
Despised by all, and doom'd to meet  
Her lovers at her rival's feet,  
She flies assemblies, shuns the ball,  
And cries out "Vanity!" on all;  
Affects to scorn the tinsel-shows  
Of glittering belles and gaudy beaux;  
Nor longer hopes to hide by dress  
The tracks of age upon her face 20  
Now careless grown of airs polite,  
Her noonday nightcap meets the sight;  
Her hair uncomb'd collects together,  
With ornaments of many a feather;  
Her stays for easiness thrown by,  
Her rumpled handkerchief awry,  
A careless figure half undress'd,  
(The reader's wits may guess the rest);  
All points of dress and neatness carried,  
As though she'd been a twelvemonth married;  
She spends her breath, as years prevail, 31  
At thus sad wicked world to rail,  
To slander all her sex *unpromptu*,  
And wonder what the times will come to.

Tom Brainless, at the close of last year,  
Had been six years a rev'rend Pastor,  
And now resolved, to smoothe his life,  
To seek the blessing of a wife.  
His brethren saw his amorous temper,  
And recommended fair Miss Sumper, 40  
Who, fond, they heard, of sacred truth,  
Had left her levities of youth,  
Grown fit for ministerial union,  
And grave, as Christian's wife in Bunyan.<sup>1</sup>

On this he rigg'd him in his best,  
And got his old grey wig new dress'd,

<sup>1</sup> Christiana, central figure in the second part of *Pilgrim's Progress*

Fix'd on his suit of sable stuffs,  
And brush'd the powder from the cuffs,  
With black silk stockings, yet in being, 50  
The same he took his first degree in;  
Procured a horse of breed from Europe,  
And learn'd to mount him by the stirrup,  
And set forth fierce to court the maid;  
His white-hair'd Deacon went for aid;  
And on the night, in solemn mode,  
The Reverend Mr. Brainless rode.  
Thus grave, the courtly pair advance,  
Like knight and squire in famed romance.<sup>2</sup>  
The priest then bow'd in sober gesture,  
And all in scripture terms address'd her; 60  
He'd found, for reasons amply known,  
It was not good to be alone,  
And thought his duty led to trying  
The great command of multiplying;  
So with submission, by her leave,  
He'd come to look him out an Eve,  
And hoped, in pilgrimage of life,  
To find an helpmate in a wife,  
A wife discreet and fair wital,  
To make amends for Adam's fall. 70

In short, the bargain finish'd soon,  
A reverend Doctor made them one.  
And now the joyful people rouse all  
To celebrate their priest's espousal;  
And first, by kind agreement set,  
In case their priest a wife could get,  
The parish vote him five pounds clear,  
T'increase his salary every year.  
Then swift the tag-rag gentry come  
To welcome Madam Brainless home, 80  
Wish their good Parson joy; with pride  
In order round salute the bride;  
At home, at visits and at meetings,  
To Madam all avow precedence,  
Greet her at church with rev'rence due,  
And next the pulpit fix her pew

1772-1773

### From M'FINGAL

#### CANTO III

### [The Tarring of Squire M'Fingal]

Now warm with ministerial ire,  
Fierce sallied forth our loyal Squire,  
And on his striding steps attends  
His desperate clan of Tory friends.

<sup>1</sup> Don Quixote and Sancho Panza



When sudden met his wrathful eye  
 A pole ascending through the sky,  
 Which numerous throngs of whiggish race  
 Were raising in the market-place.  
 Not higher school-boy's kites aspire,  
 Or royal mast, or country spire; 10  
 Like spears at Brobdiagnian<sup>1</sup> tilting,  
 Or Satan's walking-staff in Milton  
 And on its top, the flag unfur'd  
 Waved triumph o'er the gazing world,  
 Inscribed with inconsistent types  
 Of Liberty and *thirteen stripes*.<sup>2</sup>  
 Beneath, the crowd without delay  
 The dedication-rites essay,  
 And gladly pay, in ancient fashion,  
 The ceremonies of libation, 20  
 While briskly to each patriot lip  
 Walks eager round the inspiring flip<sup>3</sup>;  
 Delicious draught whose powers inherit  
 The quintessence of public spirit;  
 Which whoso tastes, perceives his mind  
 To nobler politics refined;  
 Or roused to martial controversy,  
 As from transforming cups of Circe;  
 Or warm'd with Homer's nectar'd liquor,  
 That fill'd the veins of gods with ichor. 30  
 At hand for new supplies in store,  
 The tavern opens its friendly door,  
 Whence to and fro the waiters run,  
 Like bucket-men at fires in town.  
 Then with three shouts that tore the sky,  
 'Tis consecrate to Liberty.  
 To guard it from th' attacks of Tories,  
 A grand Committee cull'd of four is;  
 Who foremost on the patriot spot,  
 Had brought the flip, and paid the shot 40  
 By this, M'Fingal with his train  
 Advanced upon th' adjacent plain,  
 And full with loyalty possest,  
 Pour'd forth the zeal, that fired his breast.

"What mad-brain'd rebel gave commu-  
 sion,

To raise this May-pole of sedition?  
 Like Babel, rear'd by bawling throngs,  
 With like confusion too of tongues,

<sup>1</sup> Brobdiagn was the land of the giants, in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. <sup>2</sup> The American flag. It would be wrong to imagine that the stripes bear any allusion to the slave trade. [Trumbull's ironical note.]

<sup>3</sup> Flip, a liquor composed of beer, rum, and sugar, the common treat at that time in the country towns of New England. [Trumbull's note]

To point at heaven and summon down  
 The thunders of the British crown? 50  
 Say, will this paltry Pole secure  
 Your forfeit heads from Gage's power?  
 Attack'd by heroes brave and crafty,  
 Is this to stand your ark of safety;  
 Or driven by Scottish laird and laddie,  
 Think ye to rest beneath its shadow?  
 When bombs, like fiery serpents, fly,  
 And balls rush hissing through the sky,  
 Will this vile Pole, devote to freedom,  
 Save like the Jewish pole in Edom; 60  
 Or like the brazen snake of Moses,  
 Cure your cracked skulls and batter'd noses?  
 "Ye dupes to every factious rogue  
 And tavern-prating demagogue,  
 Whose tongue but rings, with sound more  
 full,  
 On th' empty drumhead of his skull,  
 Behold you not what noisy fools  
 Use you, worse simpletons, for tools?  
 For Liberty, in your own by-sense,  
 Is but for crimes a patent license, 70  
 To break of law th' Egyptian yoke,  
 And throw the world in common stock;  
 Reduce all grievances and ills  
 To Magna Charta of your wills,  
 Establish cheats and frauds and nonsense,  
 Framed to the model of your conscience;  
 Cry justice down, as out of fashion,  
 And fix its scale of depreciation;  
 Defy all creditors to trouble ye,  
 And keep new years of Jewish jubilee; 80  
 Drive judges out, like Aaron's calves,  
 By jurisdiction of white staves,<sup>2</sup>  
 And make the bar and bench and steeple  
 Submit t'our Sovereign Lord, The People<sup>3</sup>;  
 By plunder rise to power and glory,  
 And brand all property as Tory;  
 Expose all wares to lawful seizures  
 By mobbers or monopolizers;  
 Break heads and windows and the peace,  
 For your own interest and increase; 90  
 Dispute and pray and fight and groan

<sup>1</sup> alluding to the "scale of depreciation" adopted by Congress to ascertain the fluctuating values of continental paper money. <sup>2</sup> In some instances, the judges were forced to retire by the people, who assembled in multitudes, armed with white staves. [Trumbull's note.]

<sup>3</sup> The denunciations which follow, particularly of self-made legislators, are very similar to those later directed by Federalists at the Democrats.

For public good, and mean your own;  
 Prevent the law by fierce attacks  
 From quitting scores upon your backs;  
 Lay your old dread, the gallows, low,  
 And seize the stocks, your ancient foe,  
 And turn them to convenient engines  
 To wreak your patriotic vengeance;  
 While all, your rights who understand,  
 Confess them in their owner's hand; 100  
 And when by clamors and confusions,  
 Your freedom's grown a public nuisance,  
 Cry 'Liberty,' with powerful yearning,  
 As he does 'Fire!' whose house is burn-  
 ing;  
 Though he already has much more  
 Than he can find occasion for.  
 While every clown, that tills the plains,  
 Though bankrupt in estate and brains,  
 By this new light transform'd to traitor,  
 Forsakes his plough to turn dictator, 110  
 Starts an haranguing chief of Whigs,  
 And drags you by the ears, like pigs.  
 All bluster, arm'd with factious licence,  
 New-born at once to politicians.  
 Each leather-apron'd dunce, grown wise,  
 Presents his forward face t'advise,  
 And tatter'd legislators meet,  
 From every workshop through the street  
 His goose the tailor finds new use in,  
 To patch and turn the Constitution; 120  
 The blacksmith comes with sledge and grate  
 To iron-bind the wheels of state;  
 The quack forbears his patients' souse,  
 To purge the Council and the House,  
 The tinker quits his moulds and doxes,  
 To cast assembly-men and proxies.  
 From dunghills deep of blackest hue,  
 Your dirt-bred patriots spring to view,  
 To wealth and power and honors rise,  
 Like new-wing'd maggots changed to flies,  
 And fluttering round in high parade, 131  
 Strut in the robe, or gay cockade  
 Sec, Arnold<sup>1</sup> quits, for ways more certain,  
 His bankrupt-perj'ries for his fortune,  
 Brews rum no longer in his store,  
 Jockey and skipper now no more,  
 Forsakes his warehouses and docks,  
 And wits of slander for the pox;  
 And cleansed by patriotism from shame,

<sup>1</sup> Benedict Arnold, charged with perjury at the time of his bankruptcy proceedings, before the war

Grows General of the foremost name. 140  
 For in this ferment of the stream  
 The dregs have work'd up to the brim,  
 And by the rule of topsy-turves,  
 The scum stands foaming on the surface  
 You've caused your pyramid t'ascend,  
 And set it on the little end.  
 Like Hudibras, your empire's made,  
 Whose crupper had o'er'topp'd his head.  
 You've push'd and turn'd the whole world  
 up-

Side down, and got yourselves at top, 150  
 While all the great ones of your state  
 Are crush'd beneath the popular weight;  
 Nor can you boast, this present hour,  
 The shadow of the former power.  
 For what's your Congress or its end?  
 A power, t'advise and recommend;  
 To call forth troops, adjust your quotas—  
 And yet no soul is bound to notice;  
 To pawn your faith to th' utmost limit,  
 But cannot bind you to redeem it; 160  
 And when in want no more in them lies,  
 Than begging from your State Assemblies,  
 Can utter oracles of dread,  
 Like fnar Bacon's brazen head,  
 But when a faction dares dispute 'em,  
 Has ne'er an arm to execute 'em:  
 As though you chose supreme dictators,  
 And put them under conservators."

Thus said, our 'Squire, yet undismay'd,  
 Call'd forth the Constable to aid, 170  
 And bade him read, in nearer station,  
 The Riot-act and Proclamation.  
 He swift, advancing to the ring,  
 Began, "Our Sovereign Lord, the King!"—  
 When thousand clam'rous tongues he hears,  
 And clubs and stones assail his ears.  
 To fly was vain; to fight was idle;  
 By foes encompass'd in the middle,  
 His hope in stratagems he found,  
 And fell right craftily to ground; 180  
 Then crept to seek an hiding place,  
 'Twas all he could, beneath a brace;  
 Where soon the conq'ring crew espied him,  
 And where he lurk'd, they caught and tied  
 him.

At once with resolution fatal,  
 Both Whigs and Tories rush'd to battle.  
 Instead of weapons, either hand  
 Seized on such arms as came to hand.

And as famed Ovid<sup>1</sup> paints th' adventures  
 Of wrangling Lapthae and Centaurs, 190  
 Who at their feast, by Bacchus led,  
 Threw bottles at each other's head;  
 And these arms failing in their scuffles,  
 Attack'd with andirons, tongs and shovels:  
 So clubs and billets, staves and stones  
 Met fierce, encountering every scone,  
 And cover'd o'er with knobs and pains  
 Each void receptacle for brains;  
 Their clamors rend the skies around,  
 The hulls rebellow to the sound; 200  
 And many a groan increas'd the din  
 From batter'd nose and broken shin.  
 M'Fingal, rising at the word,  
 Drew forth his own militia-sword;  
 Thrice cried "King George," as erst in dis-  
 tress,

Knights of romance invoked a mistress;  
 And brandishing the blade in air,  
 Struck terror through th' opposing war  
 The Whigs, unsafe within the wind  
 Of such commotion, shrunk behind. 210  
 With whirling steel around address'd,  
 Fierce through their thickest throng he press'd,  
 (Who roll'd on either side in arch,  
 Like Red Sea waves in Israel's march)  
 And like a meteor rushing through,  
 Struck on their Pole a vengeful blow.  
 Around, the Whigs, of clubs and stones  
 Discharged whole volleys, in platoons,  
 That o'er in whistling fury fly;  
 But not a foe dares venture nigh. 220  
 And now perhaps with glory crown'd  
 Our 'Squire had fell'd the pole to ground,  
 Had not some Pow'r, a Whig at heart,  
 Descended down and took their part;  
 (Whether 'twere Pallas, Mars or Iris,  
 'Tis scarce worth while to make inquiries)  
 Who at the nick of time alarming,  
 Assumed the solemn form of Chairman,  
 Address'd a Whig, in every scene  
 The stoutest wrestler on the green, 230  
 And pointed where the spade was found,  
 Late used to set their pole in ground,  
 And urged, with equal arms and might,  
 To dare our 'Squire to single fight.  
 The Whig thus arm'd, untaught to yield,  
 Advanced tremendous to the field.

Nor did M'Fingal shun the foe, -  
 But stood to brave the desp'rate blow;  
 While all the party gazed, suspended  
 To see the deadly combat ended; 240  
 And Jove in equal balance weigh'd  
 The sword against the brandish'd spade,  
 He weigh'd; but lighter than a dream,  
 The sword flew up, and kick'd the beam.  
 Our 'Squire on tiptoe rising fair  
 Lifts high a noble stroke in air,  
 Which hung not, but like dreadful engines,  
 Descended on his foe in vengeance.  
 But ah! in danger, with dishonor  
 The sword perfidious fails its owner; 250  
 That sword, which oft had stood its ground,  
 By huge trainbands encircled round,  
 And on the bench, with blade right loyal,  
 Had won the day at many a trial,<sup>1</sup>  
 Of stones and clubs had braved th' alarms,  
 Shrunk from these new Vulcanian arms.  
 The spade so temper'd from the sledge,  
 Nor keen nor solid harm'd its edge,  
 Now met it, from his arm of might,  
 Descending with steep force to smite, 260  
 The blade snapp'd short—and from his hand,  
 With rust embrown'd the glittering sand.  
 Swift turn'd M'Fingal at the view,  
 And call'd to aid th' attendant crew,  
 In vain, the Tories all had run,  
 When scarce the fight was well begun,  
 Their setting wigs he saw decreas'd  
 Far in th' horizon tow'rd the west.  
 Amazed, he view'd the shameful sight,  
 And saw no refuge, but in flight. 270  
 But age unwieldy check'd his pace,  
 Though fear had wing'd his flying race,  
 For not a trifling prize at stake;  
 No less than great M'Fingal's back  
 With legs and arms he work'd his course,  
 Like rider that outgoes his horse,  
 And labor'd hard to get away, as  
 Old Satan struggling on through chaos;  
 Till looking back, he spied in rear  
 The spade-arm'd chief advanced too near 280  
 Then stopp'd and seized a stone, that lay  
 An ancient landmark near the way;  
 Nor shall we as old bards have done,  
 Affirm it weigh'd an hundred ton;

<sup>1</sup> See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book 12th. [Trumbull's note.]

<sup>2</sup> It was the fashion in New England at that time for judges to wear swords on the bench [Trumbull's note.]

But such a stone, as at a shift  
 A modern might suffice to lift,  
 Since men, to credit their enigmas,  
 Are dwindled down to dwarfs and pigmies,  
 And giants exiled with their cronies  
 To Brobdingnags and Patagonias. 290  
 But while our Hero turn'd him round,  
 And tugg'd to raise it from the ground,  
 The fatal spade discharged a blow  
 Tremendous on his rear below:  
 His bent knee fail'd, and void of strength  
 Stretch'd on the ground his manly length.  
 Like ancient oak o'erturn'd, he lay,  
 Or tower to tempests fall'n a prey,  
 Or mountain sunk with all his pines,  
 Or flow'r the plow to dust consigns, 300  
 And more things else—but all men know 'em,  
 If slightly versed in epic poem.  
 At once the crew, at this dread crisis,  
 Fall on, and bind him, ere he rises,  
 And with loud shouts and joyful soul,  
 Conduct him prisoner to the pole  
 When now the mob in lucky hour  
 Had got their en'mies in their power,  
 They first proceed, by grave command,  
 To take the Constable in hand 310  
 Then from the pole's sublimest top  
 The active crew let down the rope,  
 At once its other end in haste bind,  
 And make it fast upon his waistband;  
 Till like the earth, as stretch'd on tenter,  
 He hung self-balanced on his centre.  
 Then upwards, all hands hoisting sail,  
 They swung him, like a keg of ale,  
 Till to the pinnacle in height  
 He vaulted, like balloon or kite. 320  
 As Socrates<sup>1</sup> of old at first did  
 To aid philosophy get hoisted,  
 And found his thoughts flow strangely clear,  
 Swung in a basket in mid air—  
 Our culprit thus, in purer sky,  
 With like advantage raised his eye,  
 And looking forth in prospect wide,  
 His Tory errors clearly spied,  
 And from his elevated station,  
 With bawling voice began addressing: 330  
 "Good gentlemen and friends and kin,  
 For heaven's sake hear, if not for mine!

I here renounce the Pope, the Turks,  
 The King, the Devil and all their works;  
 And will, set me but once at ease,  
 Turn Whig or Christian, what you please;  
 And always mind your rules so justly,  
 Should I live long as old Methus'lah,  
 I'll never join in British rage,  
 Nor help Lord North, nor Gen'ral Gage; 340  
 Nor lift my gun in future fights,  
 Nor take away your Charter-rights;  
 Nor overcome your new-raised levies,  
 Destroy your towns, nor burn your navies;  
 Nor cut your poles down while I've breath,  
 Though raised more thick than hatchel-teeth:  
 But leave King George and all his elves  
 To do their conquering work themselves."

This said, they lower'd him down in state,  
 Spread at all points, like falling cat; 350  
 But took a vote first on the question,  
 That they'd accept this full confession,  
 And to their fellowship and favor,  
 Restore him on his good behavior.

Not so our 'Squire submits to rule,  
 But stood, heroic as a mule  
 "You'll find it all in vain," quoth he,  
 "To play your rebel tricks on me  
 All punishments, the world can render,  
 Serve only to provoke th' offender, 360  
 The will gains strength from treatment hor-  
 rid

As hudes grow harder when they're curried.  
 No man e'er felt the halter draw,  
 With good opinion of the law,  
 Or held in method orthodox  
 His love of justice, in the stocks;  
 Or fail'd to lose by sheriff's shears  
 At once his loyalty and ears.  
 Have you made Murray look less big,  
 Or smoked old Williams to a Whig? 370  
 Did our mobb'd O'er quit his station,<sup>2</sup>  
 Or heed his vows of resignation?  
 Has Rvington,<sup>3</sup> in dread of stripes,  
 Ceased lying since you stole his types?

<sup>1</sup> The operation of smoking Tories was thus performed. The victim was confined in a close room before a large fire of green wood, and a cover applied to the top of the chimney [Trumbull's note] Murray and Williams were members of the Mandamus Council in New England.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Oliver, Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts <sup>3</sup> James Rvington, a royalist printer in New York, whose press was raided by a gang from New Haven

<sup>1</sup> In Aristophanes' comedy of *The Clouds*, Socrates is represented as hoisted in a basket to aid contemplation [Trumbull's note]

And can you think my faith will alter,  
By tarring, whipping, or the halter?  
I'll stand the worst; for recompense  
I trust King George and Providence.  
And when with conquest gain'd I come,  
Array'd in law and terror home, 380  
Ye'll rue this inauspicious morn,  
And curse the day, when ye were born,  
In Job's high style of imprecations,  
With all his plagues, without his patience "

Meanwhile, beside the pole, the guard  
A Bench of Justice had prepared,<sup>1</sup>  
Where sitting round in awful sort  
The grand Committee hold their Court,  
While all the crew, in silent awe,  
Wait from their lips the lore of law. 390  
Few moments with deliberation  
They hold the solemn consultation;  
When soon in judgment all agree,  
And Clerk proclaims the dread decree,  
"That 'Squire M'Fingal having grown  
The vilest Tory in the town,  
And now in full examination  
Convicted by his own confession,  
Finding no tokens of repentance,  
This Court proceeds to render sentence. 400  
That first the mob a slip-knot single  
Tie round the neck of said M'Fingal,  
And in due form do tar him next,  
And feather, as the law directs,  
Then through the town attendant ride him  
In cart with Constable beside him,  
And having held him up to shame,  
Bring to the pole, from whence he came."

Forthwith the crowd proceed to deck  
With halter'd noose M'Fingal's neck, 410  
While he in peril of his soul  
Stood tied half-hanging to the pole,  
Then lifting high the ponderous jar,  
Pour'd o'er his head the smoking tar.  
With less profusion once was spread  
Oil on the Jewish monarch's head,  
That down his beard and vestments ran,  
And cover'd all his outward man  
As when (so Claudian sings) the gods  
And earth-born giants fell at odds, 420  
The stout Enceladus in malice  
Tore mountains up to throw at Pallas;

And while he held them o'er his head,  
The river, from their fountains fed,  
Pour'd down his back its copious tide,  
And wore its channels in his hide:  
So from the high-raised urn the torrents  
Spread down his side their various currents;  
His flowing wig, as next the brim,  
First met and drank the sable stream, 430  
Adown his visage stern and grave  
Roll'd and adhered the viscid wave;  
With arms depending as he stood,  
Each cuff capacious holds the flood;  
From nose and chin's remotest end,  
The tarry icicles descend;  
Till all o'erspread, with colors gay,  
He glitter'd to the western ray,  
Like sleet-bound trees in wintry skies,  
Or Lapland idol carved in ice. 440  
And now the feather-bag display'd  
Is waved in triumph o'er his head,  
And clouds him o'er with feathers missive,  
And down, upon the tar, adhesive  
Not Maia's son, with wings for ears,<sup>1</sup>  
Such plumage round his visage wears,  
Nor Milton's six-wing'd angel gathers  
Such superfluity of feathers  
Now all complete appears our 'Squire,  
Like Gorgon or Chimaera dire, 450  
Nor more could boast on Plato's plan<sup>2</sup>  
To rank among the race of man,  
Or prove his claim to human nature,  
As a two-legg'd unfeather'd creature.

Then on the fatal cart, in state  
They raised our grand Duumvirate.  
And as at Rome a like committee,  
Who found an owl within their city,  
With solemn rites and grave processions  
At every shrine perform'd lustrations; 460  
And lest infection might take place  
From such grim fowl with feather'd face,  
All Rome attends him through the street  
In triumph to his country seat:  
With like devotion all the choir  
Paraded round our awful 'Squire;  
In front the martial music comes  
Of horns and fiddles, fifes and drums,  
With jingling sound of carriage bells,  
And treble creak of rusted wheels. 470

<sup>1</sup> This imitation of legal forms by the New England mobs, Trumbull thinks, "marks a curious trait of national character."

<sup>2</sup> Mercury <sup>3</sup> Alluding to Plato's famous definition of man, *Animal biped ensipennis*—a two-legged animal without feathers [Trumbull's note]

Behind, the crowd, in lengthen'd row  
With proud procession, closed the show.  
And at fit periods every throat  
Combined in universal shout,

And hail'd great Liberty in chorus,  
Or bawl'd "Confusion to the Tories." . . .

1782

## *Revolutionary Songs and Ballads*

MOST OF THE SONGS growing out of the Revolutionary conflict were produced by unknown writers, and most possess little poetic value beyond expressing the feelings of the warring opponents. To the group which follows may be added the "Liberty Song" of John Dickinson (p. 247), "The Battle of the Kegs" of Francis Hopkinson (p. 269), and "To the Brave Americans" of Philip Freneau (p. 362).

"Virginia Banishing Tea" appeared anonymously in the *Pennsylvania Journal* on September 14, 1774. It illustrates the pre-Revolutionary sentiment—"Our King we love, but North we hate"—of professed loyalty to the Empire despite resistance to the ministry.

The Reverend Nathaniel Niles of Connecticut celebrated the news of Bunker Hill in a dignified song in the difficult Sapphic meter, uncommon in English poetry. At the opposite pole are the various doggerel verses set to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," sung first, perhaps, in ridicule of Yankee rusticity but soon adopted by the Yankees themselves.

It was fitting that the best of the ballads of the Revolution, in its feeling and dramatic quality, should have dealt with the incident that most stirred the hearts of the Americans, the capture and death of the schoolmaster-hero Nathan Hale, executed as a spy early in the war. Another spirited ballad, "Bold Hathorne," is concerned with one of the naval engagements of the war, of which Captain Daniel Hathorne, the novelist's grandfather, was the hero.

Jonathan Odell, an Anglican clergyman at Burlington, New Jersey, was a staunch Loyalist, whose defiant lyrics appeared from time to time in Rivington's *Royal Gazette* at New York. Joseph Stansbury, a Philadelphia merchant, was also a Tory, whose convivial songs showed more of good humor, and who was not above satirizing inefficiency in the British leaders.

The chief collections of Revolutionary songs are Frank Moore's *Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution* (1856) and *Illustrated Ballad History of the American Revolution* (1876). Numerous Tory songs are included in Winthrop Sargent's *Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution* (1857). For discussion, see Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution* (1897); S. W. Patterson, *The*

*Spirit of the American Revolution as Revealed in the Poetry of the Period* (1915); W. B. Otis, *American Verse, 1625-1807* (1909); and B. J. Lossing, "The Origin of Yankee Doodle," *Littell's Living Age*, August 10, 1861.

### VIRGINIA BANISHING TEA

By a Young Woman of Virginia

BEGONE, pernicious baneful tea,  
With all Pandora's ills possess'd;  
Hyson, no more beguiled by thee,  
My noble sons shall be oppress'd.

To Britain fly, where gold enslaves  
And venal men their birth-right sell-  
Tell North and his brib'd clan of knaves  
Their bloody acts were made in hell.

In Henry's reign those acts began,  
Which sacred rules of justice broke, 10  
North now pursues the hellish plan,  
To fix on us his slavish yoke.

But we oppose, and will be free,  
Thus great good cause we will defend,  
Nor bribe, nor Gage, nor North's decree,  
Shall make us "at his feet to bend."

From Anglia's ancient sons we came,  
Those heroes who for freedom fought;  
In Freedom's cause we'll match their fame,  
By their example greatly taught 20

Our king we love, but North we hate,  
Nor will to him submission own;  
If death's our doom, we'll brave our fate,  
But pay allegiance to the throne.

Then rouse, my sons, from slavery; free  
Your suffering homes from God's high  
wrath!

Gird on your steel, give liberty  
To all who follow in our path!

1774

### THE PENNSYLVANIA SONG

Anonymous

We are the troop that ne'er will stoop  
To wretched slavery,  
Nor shall our seed, by our base deed  
Despised vassals be;

Freedom we will bequeath to them,  
Or we will bravely die;  
Our greatest foe, ere long shall know,  
How much did Sandwich lie.  
And all the world shall know,  
Americans are free; 10  
Nor slaves nor cowards we will prove,  
Great Britain soon shall see

We'll not give up our birthright,  
Our foes shall find us men;  
As good as they, in any shape,  
The British troops shall ken.  
Huzzal brave boys, we'll beat them  
On any hostile plain,  
For freedom, wives, and children dear  
The battle we'll maintain. 20

What! can those British tyrants think,  
Our fathers cross'd the main,  
And savage foes, and dangers met,  
To be enslav'd by them?  
If so, they are mistaken,  
For we will rather die;  
And since they have become our foes,  
Their forces we defy  
And all the world shall know,  
Americans are free, 30  
Nor slaves nor cowards we will prove,  
Great Britain soon shall see.

1775

### THE AMERICAN HERO

By Nathaniel Niles

Why should vain mortals tremble at the sight  
of  
Death and destruction in the field of battle,  
Where blood and carnage clothe the field in  
crimson,  
Sounding with death-groans?

Death will invade us by the means appointed,  
And we must all bow to the king of terrors;  
Nor am I anxious, if I am prepared,  
What shape he comes in.

Infinite Wisdom teacheth us submission;  
Bids us be quiet under all His dealings; 10  
Never repining, but forever praising  
God our Creator.

Well may we praise Him all His ways are  
perfect,  
Though a resplendence infinitely glowing,  
Much hides the glory from the sight of mortals,  
Struck blind by luster.

Good is Jehovah in bestowing sunshine,  
Nor less His goodness in the storm and thun-  
der  
Mercies and judgment both proceed from  
kindness—  
Infinite kindness! 20

O then exult that God forever reigneth!  
Clouds that around Him hinder our percep-  
tion,  
Bind us the stronger to exalt His name, and  
Shout louder praises!

Then to the goodness of my Lord and Master,  
I will commit all that I have or wish for  
Sweetly as babes sleep, will I give my life up  
When called to yield it

Now, War, I dare thee, clad in smoky pillars,  
Bursting from bomb-shells, roaring from the  
cannon, 30  
Rattling in grape-shot, like a storm of hail-  
stones,  
Torturing ether!

To the bleak heavens let the spreading flame  
rise,  
Breaking like Ætna through the smoky col-  
umns,  
Lowering like Egypt o'er the burning city!—  
Wantonly ruined

While all their hearts quick palpitate for havoc,  
Let slip your blood-hounds, named the British  
lions,  
Dauntless as death-stares, nimbler as the whirl-  
wind,  
Dreadful as demons! 40

<sup>1</sup> Charlestown, burned by the British attacking Bun-  
ker's Hill

Let ocean waft on all your floating castles,  
Fraught with combustion, horrible to nature;  
Then, with your sails filled by a storm of  
vengeance,  
Bear down to battle.

From the dire caverns made by ghostly miners,  
Let the explosion, dreadful as volcanoes,  
Heave the broad town, with all its wealth and  
people,  
Quick to destruction.

Still shall the banner of the King of Heaven  
Never advance where I'm afraid to follow 50  
While that precedes me, with an open bosom,  
Mars, I defy thee!

Fame and dear Freedom lure me on to battle,  
While a fell despot, grimmer than a death's-  
head,  
Stings me with serpents fiercer than Medusa's,  
To the encounter.

Life for my country and the cause of freedom,  
Is but a cheap price for a worm to part with  
And if preserved in so great a contest,  
Life is redoubled. 60

1775

## THE YANKEE'S RETURN FROM CAMP

Anonymous

FATHER and I went down to camp,  
Along with Captain Gooding,  
And there we see the men and boys,  
As thick as hasty pudding  
Chorus—Yankee Doodle, keep it up,  
Yankee Doodle, dandy,  
Mind the music and the step,  
And with the girls be handy

And there we see a thousand men,  
As rich as 'Squire David, 10  
And what they wasted every day,  
I wish it could be saved.

The 'lasses they eat every day,  
Would keep a house a winter;  
They have so much that, I'll be bound,  
They eat it when they're a mind to.



And there we see a swamping <sup>1</sup> gun,  
 Large as a log of maple,  
 Upon a deuced little cart,  
 A load for father's cattle.

20

And every time they shoot it off,  
 It takes a horn of powder,  
 And makes a noise like father's gun,  
 Only a nation louder

I went as nigh to one myself,  
 As Siah's underpinning;  
 And father went as nigh again,  
 I thought the deuce was in him.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,  
 I thought he would have cock'd it;  
 It scar'd me so, I shrink'd it off,  
 And hung by father's pocket.

30

And Captain Davis had a gun,  
 He kind of clapped his hand on't,  
 And stuck a crooked stabbing iron  
 Upon the little end on't

And there I see a pumpkin shell  
 As big as mother's basin,  
 And every time they touch'd it off,  
 They scamper'd like the nation.

40

I see a little barrel too,  
 The heads were made of leather,  
 They knock'd upon't with little clubs,  
 And call'd the folks together.

And there was Captain Washington,  
 And gentlefolks about him,  
 They say he's grown so tarnal proud,  
 He will not ride without 'em.

He got him on his meeting clothes,  
 Upon a slapping stallion,  
 He set the world along in rows,  
 In hundreds and in millions.

50

The flaming ribbons in his hat,  
 They look'd so tearing fine ah,  
 I wanted pockily to get,  
 To give to my Jemimah.

I see another snarl of men  
 A digging graves, they told me,  
 So tarnal long, so tarnal deep,  
 They 'tended they should hold me.

60

<sup>1</sup> huge

It scar'd me so, I hook'd it off,  
 Nor stop'd, as I remember,  
 Nor turned about, till I got home,  
 Lock'd up in mother's chamber.

1775

## HALE IN THE BUSH

Anonymous

THE breezes went steadily through the tall  
 pines,  
 A-saying "Oh! hu-ushi!" a-saying "Oh!  
 hu-ushi!"

As sully stole by a bold legion of horse,  
 For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush

"Keep still!" said the thrush, as she nestled  
 her young

In a nest by the road, in a nest by the road,  
 "For the tyrants are near, and with them ap-  
 pear  
 What bodes us no good, what bodes us no  
 good"

The brave captain heard it, and thought of his  
 home

In a cot by the brook, in a cot by the  
 brook,

10

With mother and sister and memories dear,  
 He so gaily forsook, he so gaily forsook

Cooling shades of the night were coming  
 apace,

The tattoo had beat, the tattoo had beat:  
 The noble one sprang from his dark lurking-  
 place  
 To make his retreat, to make his retreat.

He warily trod on the dry rustling leaves,  
 As he passed through the wood, as he  
 passed through the wood,

And silently gained his rude launch on the  
 shore,

As she played with the flood, as she played  
 with the flood

20

The guards of the camp on that dark dreary  
 night,

Had a murderous will, had a murderous will:  
 They took him and bore him afar from the  
 shore,

To a hut on the hill, to a hut on the hill.

No mother was there, nor a friend who could cheer,

In that little stone cell, in that little stone cell,

But he trusted in love from his Father above—  
In his heart all was well, in his heart all was well.

An ominous owl with his solemn bass voice  
Sat moaning hard by, sat moaning hard by:

"The tyrant's proud minions most gladly rejoice,  
For he must soon die, for he must soon die"

The brave fellow told them, no thing he restrained,—

The cruel gen'ral; the cruel gen'ral—  
His errand from camp, of the ends to be gained,  
And said that was all, and said that was all.

They took him and bound him and bore him away,

Down the hill's grassy side, down the hill's grassy side

'Twas there the base hirelings, in royal array,  
His cause did deride, his cause did deride. 40

Five minutes were given, short moments, no more,

For him to repent, for him to repent.  
He prayed for his mother—he asked not another,—

To heaven he went, to heaven he went.

The faith of a martyr the tragedy showed,  
As he trod the last stage, as he trod the last stage.

And Britons will shudder at gallant Hale's blood,

As his words do presage, as his words do presage:

"Thou pale king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,

Go frighten the slave, go frighten the slave;  
Tell tyrants, to you their allegiance they owe— 51

No fears for the brave, no fears for the brave!"

1776

BOLD HATHORNE

Anonymous

The twenty-second of August,  
Before the close of day,  
All hands on board our privateer,  
We got her under way;  
We kept the eastern shore along,  
For forty leagues or more,  
Then our departure took for sea,  
From the isle Monhegan shore.

Bold Hathorne was commander,  
A man of real worth, 10  
Old England's cruel tyranny,  
Induced him to go forth,  
She, with relentless fury,  
Was plundering all our coast,  
And thought, because her strength was great,  
Our glorious cause was lost

We cruised to the eastward,  
Near the coast of Portugale;  
In longitude of twenty-seven  
We saw a lofty sail, 20  
We gave her chase, and soon we saw  
She was a British snow  
Standing for fair America,  
With troops for General Howe.

Our captain did inspect her  
With glasses, and he said—  
"My boys, she means to fight us,  
But be you not afraid,  
All hands now beat to quarters,  
See every thing is clear, 30  
We'll give her a broadside, my boys,  
As soon as she comes near."

She was prepared with nettings,  
And had her men secured,  
And bore directly for us,  
And put us close on board;  
When cannon roar'd like thunder,  
And muskets fired amain,  
But soon we were alongside,  
And grappled to her chain. 40

And now the scene is alter'd,  
The cannon ceased to roar,  
We fought with swords and boarding-pikes  
One glass or something more,

Till British pride and glory,  
No longer dared to stay,  
But cut the Yankee grapplings,  
And quickly bore away.

Our case was not so desperate  
As plainly might appear;  
Yet sudden death did enter  
On board our privateer  
Mahoney, Crew, and Clemmons,  
The valiant and the brave,  
Fell glorious in the contest,  
And met a watery grave.

Ten other men were wounded  
Among our warlike crew,  
With them our noble captain,  
To whom all praise is due,  
To him and all our officers,  
Let's give a hearty cheer:  
*Success to fair America*  
*And our good privateer!*  
c. 1777

## THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

### A PROPHECY

By Jonathan Odell (?)

WHAT though last year be past and gone,  
Why should we grieve or mourn about it?  
As good a year is now begun,  
And better too,—let no one doubt it.

'Tis New Year's morn; why should we  
part?

Why not enjoy what heaven has sent  
us?

Let wine expand the social heart,  
Let friends, and mirth, and wine con-  
tent us.

War's rude alarms disturbed last year;  
Our country bled and wept around us; 10  
But this each honest heart shall cheer,  
And peace and plenty shall surround us.

Last year "King Congo,"<sup>1</sup> through the land,  
Displayed his thirteen stripes to fright us;  
But George's power, in Clinton's hand,  
In this New Year shall surely right us.

<sup>1</sup> Congress

Last year saw many honest men  
Torn from each dear and sweet connection,  
But this shall see them home again,  
And happy in their king's protection. 20

Last year vain Frenchmen braved our coasts,  
And baffled Howe, and 'scaped from Byron,  
But this shall bring their vanquished hosts  
To crouch beneath the British hon.

Last year rebellion proudly stood,  
Elate, in her meridian glory;  
But this shall quench her pride in blood,—  
George shall avenge each martyred Tory.

Then bring us wine, full bumpers bring:  
Hail this New Year in joyful chorus; 30  
God bless great George our gracious king,  
And crush rebellion down before us!

'Tis New Year's morn; why should we  
part?

Why not enjoy what heaven has sent  
us?

Let wine expand the social heart,  
Let friends, and mirth, and wine  
content us.

1779

## LORDS OF THE MAIN

By Joseph Stansbury

WHEN Faction, in league with the treacherous  
Gaul,  
Began to look big and paraded in state;  
A meeting was held at Credulity Hall,  
And Echo proclaimed their ally good and  
great!

By sea and by land  
Such wonders are plann'd,  
No less than the bold British Lion to chafe!  
"Well hove!" says Jack Lanyard,  
French, Congo, and Spaniard,  
"Have at you—remember we're Lords of the  
Main!" 10  
Lords of the main—aye, Lords of the Main;  
The tars of Old England are Lords of the  
Main.

Though party contention awhile may perplex,  
And lenity hold us in doubtful suspense;  
If perfidy rouse, or ingratitude vex,  
In defiance of Hell we'll chastise the offense.

When danger alarms,  
 'Tis then that an arms  
 United we rush on the foe with disdain:  
 And when the storm rages 20  
 It only presages  
 Fresh triumphs to Britons, as Lords of the  
 Main.

Lords of the Main—aye, Lords of the  
 Main—  
 Let Thunder proclaim it, we're Lords of the  
 Main!

Then, Britons, strike home—make sure of  
 your blow.

The chase is in view; never mind a lee-shore.  
 With vengeance o'ertake the confederate foe  
 'Tis now we may rival our heroes of yore!

Brave Anson and Drake,  
 Hawke, Russell, and Blake, 30  
 With ardor like yours we defy France and  
 Spain!

Combining with treason,  
 They're deaf to all reason:

Once more let them feel we are Lords of the  
 Main.

Lords of the Main—aye, Lords of the  
 Main—  
 The first-born of Neptune are Lords of the  
 Main!

Nor are we alone in the noble career,  
 The soldier partakes of the generous flame—  
 To glory he marches, to glory we steer  
 Between us we share the rich harvest of  
 fame. 40

Recorded on high,  
 Their names never die,

Of heroes by sea and by land what a train!  
 To the King, then, God bless him!  
 The world shall confess him.

"The Lord of these men who are Lords of the  
 Main!"

Lords of the Main—aye, Lords of the  
 Main—

The tars of Old England are Lords of the  
 Main.

1780

## 1737 ~ Francis Hopkinson ~ 1791

CLEVER, VERSATILE, and public-spirited as Franklin, but never so pre-eminent, Francis Hopkinson was, like his father before him, a distinguished citizen of Philadelphia. The first student to enroll in the Academy when it opened in 1751, he received the first diploma of the College of Philadelphia six years later. In 1766, in quest of political preferment in England, he enjoyed the society of his fellow-townsmen, Franklin and Benjamin West, although his relative, Lord North, was regretfully unable to help him, because of the confusion resulting from the repeal of the Stamp Act.

Returning to Philadelphia, he developed his interest in the arts: he studied the harpsichord, set songs and psalms to music, wrote poems and Addisonian essays for the magazines, made crayon portraits, and in 1777 designed the American flag. Despite these many avocations, he became a successful lawyer and judge and played a real part in the political activities of the Revolution as delegate to the Continental Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, chairman of the Continental Navy Board, and judge of admiralty for Pennsylvania.

Hopkinson's most important contribution to the cause, however, was his al-

legorical satire, *A Pretty Story* (1774), reminiscent of the style of Swift and Arbuthnot, but also distinguished by a calm and unexaggerated presentation of the question. In 1778 he wrote the comic "Battle of the Kegs" on the first attempt to use mines in naval warfare, and ten years later, as an urbane Federalist, "The New Roof," another political allegory, advocating the new Constitution.

From 1789 till the end of his life, Hopkinson served Pennsylvania as a judge. The appointment left him time to correspond with Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson, to read papers before the American Philosophical Society, and to write playfully satirical essays. *Seven Songs* (1788) contains his best lyric verse set to music.

Shortly before his death Hopkinson prepared for publication *The Miscellaneous Essays and Occasional Writings of Francis Hopkinson*, which was issued in 1792. The best *Life and Works* is by G. E. Hastings (1926), with a bibliography. The best of many short accounts are Hastings's sketch in *DAB*, VIII, C. R. Hildeburn, "Francis Hopkinson," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, II, No. 3 (1878), M. C. Tyler, *The Literary History of the American Revolution* (1897); and A. R. Marble, *Heralds of American Literature* (1907). More specialized studies are O. G. T. Sonneck, *Francis Hopkinson, the First American Poet-Composer* (1905), and G. E. Hastings, "John Bull and His American Descendants," *American Literature*, I, 40-68 (March, 1929), and "Francis Hopkinson and the Anti-Federalist," *ibid*, I, 405-418 (January, 1930).

### MY GEN'ROUS HEART DISDAINS

I  
My gen'rous heart disdains  
The slave of love to be,  
I scorn his servile chains,  
And boast my liberty.  
Thus whining  
And pining  
And wasting with care,  
Are not to my taste, be she ever so fair.

II  
Shall a girl's capricious frown  
Sink my noble spirits down?  
Shall a face of white and red  
Make me droop my silly head?  
Shall I set me down and sigh  
For an eye-brow or an eye?  
For a braided lock of hair,  
Curse my fortune and despair?  
My gen'rous heart disdains, &c.

III  
Still uncertain is tomorrow,  
Not quite certain is today—

Shall I waste my time in sorrow? 20  
Shall I languish life away?  
All because a cruel maid,  
Hath not Love with Love repaid.  
My gen'rous heart disdains, &c.

### A HUNTING SONG

O'er the hills far away, at the birth of the  
morn,  
I hear the full tone of the sweet-sounding  
horn;  
The sportsmen with shoutings all hail the new  
day,  
And swift run the hounds o'er the hills far  
away.  
Across the deep valley their course they pur-  
sue,  
And rush through the thickets yet silver'd  
with dew,  
Nor hedges nor ditches their speed can de-  
lay—  
Still sounds the sweet horn o'er the hills far  
away.

## THE BATTLE OF THE KEGS

Hopkinson gives the following account of the origin of his ballad "This ballad was occasioned by a real incident. Certain machines, in the form of kegs, charged with gun powder, were sent down the river to annoy the British shipping then at Philadelphia. The danger of these machines being discovered, the British manned the wharfs and shipping, and discharged their small arms and cannons at every thing they saw floating in the river during the ebb tide."

GALLANTS attend and hear a friend  
Trill forth harmonious ditty,  
Strange things I'll tell which late befell  
In Philadelphia city

'Twas early day, as poets say,  
Just when the sun was rising,  
A soldier stood on a log of wood,  
And saw a thung surprising.

As in amaze he stood to gaze,  
The truth can't be denied, sir, 10  
He spied a score of kegs or more  
Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor too in jerkin blue,  
Thus strange appearance viewing,  
First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,  
Then said, "Some mischief's brewing."

These kegs, I'm told, the rebels bold,  
Pack'd up like pickling herrings;  
And they're come down t' attack the town,  
In this new way of ferrying. 20

The soldier flew, the sailor too,  
And scar'd almost to death, sir,  
Wore out their shoes, to spread the news,  
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down throughout the town,  
Most frantic scenes were acted,  
And some ran here, and others there,  
Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cried, which some denied,  
But said the earth had quaked, 30  
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,  
Ran through the streets half naked.

Sir William<sup>1</sup> he, snug as a flea,  
Lay all this time a snoring,  
Nor dreamed of harm as he lay warm,  
In bed with Mrs. L——g.

Now in a fright, he starts upright,  
Awak'd by such a clatter;  
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,  
"For God's sake, what's the matter?" 40

At his bed-side he then espied,  
Sir Erskine at command, sir,  
Upon one foot, he had one boot,  
And th' other in his hand, sir.

"Arise, arise," Sir Erskine cries,  
"The rebels—more's the pity,  
Without a boat are all afloat,  
And rang'd before the city

"The motley crew, in vessels new,  
With Satan for their guide, sir. 50  
Pack'd up in bags, or wooden kegs,  
Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war,  
These kegs must all be routed,  
Or surely we despised shall be,  
And British courage doubted."

The royal band now ready stand,  
All rang'd in dread array, sir,  
With stomach stout to see it out,  
And make a bloody day, sir. 60

The cannons roar from shore to shore,  
The small arms make a rattle;  
Since wars began I'm sure no man  
E'er saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,  
With rebel trees surrounded;  
The distant woods, the hills and floods,  
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,  
Attack'd from ev'ry quarter; 70  
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay,  
'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made,  
Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,  
Could not oppose their powerful foes,  
The conqu'ring British troops, sir.

<sup>1</sup> General Sir William Howe

From morn to night these men of might  
 Display'd amazing courage;  
 And when the sun was fairly down,  
 Retir'd to sup their porridge.

80

An hundred men with each a pen,  
 Or more upon my word, sir,  
 It is most true would be too few,  
 Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day  
 Against these wicked kegs, sir,  
 That years to come, if they get home,  
 They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

1778

### THE TRAVELER BENIGHTED AND LOST

This is the only one of Hopkinson's poems which shows the influence of English pre-romantic poetry in its imaginative melancholy and pathos

## I

THE traveler benighted and lost,  
 O'er the mountains pursues his lone way,  
 The stream is all candied with frost  
 And the icicle hangs on the spray,  
 He wanders in hope some kind shelter to find  
 "Whilst through the sharp hawthorn keen  
 blows the cold wind."<sup>1</sup>

## II

The tempest howls dreary around  
 And rends the tall oak in its flight;  
 Fast falls the cold snow to the ground,  
 And dark is the gloom of the night. 10  
 Lone wanders the traveler a shelter to find,  
 "Whilst through the sharp hawthorn still  
 blows the cold wind."

## III

No comfort the wild woods afford,  
 No shelter the traveler can see—  
 Far off are his bed and his board  
 And his home, where he wishes to be.  
 His hearth's cheerful blaze still engages his  
 mind  
 "Whilst through the sharp hawthorn keen  
 blows the cold wind."

<sup>1</sup> *King Lear*, III, iv [Edgar] "Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind."

### THE NEW ROOF

#### A SONG FOR FEDERAL MECHANICS

The new roof is the new Constitution; the federal mechanics are the statesmen engaged in forming a united republic. The poem shows Hopkinson's continued fondness for allegorical representation of history, also used by Jeremy Belknap's *The Foresters* (1787) and J. K. Paulding's *Diversing History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* (1813)

COME, muster, my lads, your mechanical tools,  
 Your saws and your axes, your hammers and  
 rules,

Bring your mallets and planes, your level and  
 line,

And plenty of pins of American pine:  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still  
 shall be,

Our government firm, and our citizens free.

Come, up with the plates, lay them firm on the  
 wall,

Like the people at large, they're the ground-  
 work of all,

Examine them well, and see that they're sound,  
 Let no rotten part in our building be found. 10  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still  
 shall be

A government firm, and our citizens free

Now hand up the girders, lay each in his place,  
 Between them the joists must divide all the  
 space;

Like assemblymen these should lie level along,  
 Like girders, our senate prove loyal and strong  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still  
 shall be

A government firm over citizens free.

The rafters now frame; your king-posts and  
 braces,

And drive your pins home, to keep all in their  
 places, 20

Let wisdom and strength in the fabric com-  
 bine,

And your pins be all made of American pine:  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still  
 shall be,

A government firm over citizens free.

Our king-posts are judges; how upright they stand,  
 Supporting the braces, the laws of the land—  
 The laws of the land, which divide right from wrong,  
 And strengthen the weak, by weak'ning the strong.  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be,  
 Laws equal and just, for a people that's free. 30  
 Upl up! with the rafters; each frame is a state.  
 How nobly they risel their span, too, how great!  
 From the north to the south, o'er the whole they extend,  
 And rest on the walls, whilst the walls they defend  
 For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be  
 Combined in strength, yet as citizens free.  
 Now enter the purlins, and drive your pins through;  
 And see that your joints are drawn home and all true

The purlins will bind all the rafters together:  
 The strength of the whole shall defy wind and weather: 40

For our roof we will raise, and our song still shall be,

United as states, but as citizens free.

Come, raise up the turret, our glory and pride;  
 In the center it stands, o'er the whole to pre-  
 side

The sons of Columbia shall view with delight  
 Its pillars, and arches, and towering height.  
 Our roof is now raised, and our song still shall be,

A federal head o'er a people that's free.

Huzzal my brave boys, our work is complete;  
 The world shall admire Columbia's fair seat; 50  
 Its strength against tempest and time shall be  
 proof,

And thousands shall come to dwell under our roof

Whilst we drain the deep bowl, our toast still shall be

Our government firm, and our citizens free.

1787

### From A PRETTY STORY

The following allegorical account of the contemporary political situation in America just before the Revolution represents the British crown by the father, England by the old farm, Parliament by his wife, and the ministry by the stewards. The latter two connive to make trouble for the sons on their new farm (America)

#### V

In the meantime the new settlers increased exceedingly, their dealings at their father's shop became proportionately enlarged, and their partiality for their brethren of the old farm was sincere and manifest. They suffered, indeed, some inconveniences from the protectors which had been stationed amongst them, who became very troublesome in their houses. They introduced riot and intemperance into their families, debauched their daughters, and derided the orders they had made for their own good government. Moreover, the old nobleman had, at different times, sent over to them a great number of thieves, murderers, and robbers, who did much mis-

chief by practicing those crimes for which they had been banished from the old farm. But they bore those evils with as much patience as could be expected, not choosing to trouble their old father with complaints, unless in cases of important necessity.

Now the steward began to hate the new settlers with exceeding great hatred, and determined to renew his attack upon their peace and happiness. He artfully insinuated to the nobleman and his foolish wife that it was very mean, and unbecoming their greatness, to receive the contributions of the people of the new farm through the consent of their respective wives: that upon this footing they might some time or other refuse to comply with his requisitions, if they should take into their heads to think them oppressive and unreasonable; and that it was high time they should be compelled to acknowledge his unlimited power and his wife's omnipotence, which, if not enforced now, they would soon be able to resist, as they were daily increasing in numbers and strength.



Another decree was, therefore, prepared and published, directing that the people of the new farm should pay a certain stipend upon particular goods,<sup>1</sup> which they were not allowed to purchase anywhere but at their father's shop; specifying that this imposition should not be laid as an advance upon the original price of those goods, but should be paid as a tax on their arrival in the new farm; for the express purpose of supporting the dignity of the nobleman's family, and for reimbursing the expenses he pretended to have been at on their account.

This new decree occasioned great uneasiness. The people saw plainly that the steward and their mother-in-law were determined to enslave and ruin them. They again consulted together, and wrote, as before, the most dutiful and persuasive letters to their father—but to no purpose—a deaf ear was turned against all their remonstrances, and their humble requests rejected with contempt.

Finding that this moderate and decent conduct brought them no relief, they had recourse to another expedient, they bound themselves to each other in a solemn engagement<sup>2</sup> not to deal any more at their father's shop until this unconstitutional decree should be repealed, which they one and all declared to be a direct violation of the Great Paper.<sup>3</sup>

This agreement was so strictly observed that in a few months the clerks and apprentices in the old gentleman's shop began to raise a terrible outcry. They declared that their master's trade was declining exceedingly and that his wife and steward would by their mischievous machinations ruin the whole farm. They sharpened their pens and attacked the steward, and even the old lady herself, with great severity, insomuch that it was thought proper to withdraw this attempt, also, upon the rights and liberties of the new settlers. One part only of the decree was left still in force, viz., the tax upon water-gruel.<sup>4</sup>

Now there were certain men<sup>5</sup> in the old farm who had obtained an exclusive right of selling water-gruel. Vast quantities of this gruel were vended amongst the new settlers,

as they were extremely fond of it and used it universally in their families. They did not, however, trouble themselves much about the tax on water-gruel; they were well pleased with the repeal of the other parts of the decree, and fond as they were of this gruel, they considered it as not absolutely necessary to the comfort of life and determined to give up the use of it in their families, and so avoid the effects of that part of the decree.

The steward found his designs again frustrated but was not discouraged by the disappointment. He devised another scheme, so artfully contrived that he thought himself sure of success. He sent for the persons who had the sole right of vending water-gruel, and after reminding them of the obligations they were under to the nobleman and his wife for the exclusive privilege they enjoyed, he requested that they would send sundry wagons laden with gruel to the new farm, promising that the accustomed duty which they paid for their exclusive right should be taken off from all the gruel they should so send amongst the new settlers, and that in case their cargoes should come to any damage, the loss should be made good to them out of his master's coffers.

The gruel-merchants readily consented to this proposal, considering that if their cargoes were sold, their profits would be very great, and if they failed, the steward was to pay the damage. On the other hand, the steward hoped that the new settlers would not be able to resist a temptation, thus thrown in their way, of purchasing their favorite gruel, to which they had been so accustomed, and if they did use it, subject to the tax aforesaid, he would consider this as a voluntary acknowledgment that the nobleman and his wife had a right to lay upon them what impositions they pleased, and as a resignation of the privileges of the Great Paper.

But the new settlers were well aware of this decoy. They saw plainly that the gruel was not sent for their accommodation, and that if they suffered any part of it to be sold amongst them, subject to the tax imposed by the new decree, it would be considered as a willing submission to the assumed omnipotence of their mother-in-law, and a precedent for future unlimited impositions. Some, therefore, would

<sup>1</sup> palata, glass, etc    <sup>2</sup> not to import goods from England    <sup>3</sup> Magna Carta    <sup>4</sup> tea    <sup>5</sup> the East India Company

not permit the wagons to be unladen at all, but sent them back untouched to the gruel-merchants, and others suffered them to unload, but would not touch the dangerous commodity, so that it lay neglected about the roads and highways till it was quite spoiled. But one of the new settlers, whose name was Jack,<sup>1</sup> either from a keener sense of the injuries intended or from the necessity of his situation, which was such that he could not send back 10 the gruel because of a number of mercenaries<sup>2</sup> whom his father had stationed in his house to be a watch over him—he, I say, being almost driven to despair, stove to pieces the casks of gruel which had been sent him, and utterly destroyed the whole cargo.<sup>3</sup>

## VI

These violent proceedings were soon known at the old farm. Great was the uproar there. The old nobleman fell into a furious passion, declaring that the new settlers meant to throw off all dependence upon him and rebel against his authority. His wife also tore the padlocks from her lips and raved and stormed like a Billingsgate, and the steward lost all patience and moderation—swearing most profanely that he would leave no stone unturned till he had humbled the settlers of the new farm at his feet and caused their father to tread upon their 30 necks. Moreover, the gruel-merchants roared and bellowed for the loss of their gruel, and the clerks and apprentices were in the utmost consternation lest the people of the new farm should again agree to have no dealings with their father's shop.

Vengeance was forthwith prepared, especially against Jack. With him they determined to begin, hoping that by making a severe example of him, they should so terrify 40 the other families that they would all submit to the power of the steward and acknowledge the omnipotence of the great Madam.

A very large padlock<sup>4</sup> was sent over to be fastened on Jack's great gate, the key of which was given to the old nobleman, who was not to suffer it to be opened until Jack had paid for the gruel he had spilt and resigned all claim

to the privileges of the Great Paper—nor even then, unless he should think fit. Secondly, a decree was made to new-model the regulations and economy of Jack's family, in such manner that they might in future be more subjected to the will of the steward. And thirdly, a large gallows was erected before the mansion-house in the old farm, that if any of Jack's children should be suspected of misbehavior, they should not be convicted or 10 acquitted by the voice of their brethren, according to the purport of the Great Paper, but be tied neck and heels and sent over to be hanged on this gallows.

On hearing of these severities, the people were highly enraged. They were at a loss how to act, or by what means they should avoid the threatened vengeance. But the old lady and the steward persisted. The great padlock was fastened on Jack's gate, and the key given to the nobleman as had been determined on, without waiting to know whether Jack would pay for the gruel or allowing him an opportunity to make any apology or defence.

Poor Jack was now in a deplorable condition indeed. The great inlet to his farm was entirely shut up, so that he could neither carry out the produce of his land for sale nor receive from abroad the necessaries for his family.

But this was not all. The old nobleman, along with the padlock aforesaid, had sent an overseer<sup>1</sup> to hector and domineer over Jack and his family, and to endeavor to break his spirits by every possible severity, for which purpose this overseer was attended by a great number of mercenaries and armed with more than common authorities.

When the overseer first arrived in Jack's family, he was received with great respect, because he was the delegate of their aged father. For, notwithstanding all that had passed, the people of the new farm loved and revered the old nobleman with true filial affection, and attributed his unkindness entirely to the intrigues of the steward.

But this fair weather did not last long. The new overseer took the first opportunity to show that he had no intention of living in harmony and friendship with the family. Some of Jack's domestics had put on their 50

<sup>1</sup> the Massachusetts Colony    <sup>2</sup> the Board of Commissioners    <sup>3</sup> the Boston Tea Party    <sup>4</sup> the Boston Port Bill

<sup>1</sup> General Gage

Sunday clothes and waited on the overseer in the great parlor, to pay him their compliments on his arrival,<sup>1</sup> and to request his assistance in reconciling their father to them and restoring peace and cordiality between the old and new farms. But he, in a most abrupt and rude manner, stopped them short in the midst of their address, called them a parcel of disobedient scoundrels, bid them go about their business, and turning round on his heel, left the room 10 with an air of contempt and disdain.

## VII

The people of the new farm, seeing the importance of their situation, had appointed a grand committee,<sup>2</sup> consisting of some of the most respectable characters from each family, to manage their affairs in this difficult crisis. Jack, thus oppressed and insulted, requested the advice of the grand committee as to his conduct. This committee in their answer 20 sympathized cordially with him in his afflictions. They exhorted him to bear his suffering with fortitude for a time, assuring him that they looked upon the insults and punishments inflicted on him with the same indignation as if they had been inflicted on themselves, and promised to stand by and support him to the last. They recommended it to him to be firm and steady in the cause of liberty 30 and their just rights, and never to acknowledge the omnipotence of their mother-in-law, nor submit to the machinations of their enemy the steward.

In the meantime, lest Jack's family should suffer for want of necessities, his great gate being fast locked, contributions were raised for his relief amongst the other families, and handed to him over the garden wall.

The new overseer still persisted in his 40 hostile behavior, taking every opportunity to mortify and insult Jack and his family. Observing that some of the children and domestics held frequent meetings and consultations together, sometimes in the garret and sometimes in the stable, and understanding that an agreement not to deal with their father's shop until their grievances should be redressed was again talked of, he wrote a thundering pro-

hibition,<sup>1</sup> much like a pope's bull, which he caused to be pasted up in every room of the house—in which he declared and protested that such meetings were treasonable, traitorous, and rebellious, contrary to the dignity of his master, the nobleman, and inconsistent with the duty they owed to his omnipotent wife; and threatened that if two of the family should be found whispering together, they should be sent over in chains to the old farm and hanged upon the great gallows before the mansion-house.

These harsh and unconstitutional proceedings of the overseer so highly irritated Jack, and the other families of the new farm that . . .

*Cetera desunt.*<sup>2</sup>

1774

## A LETTER

FROM A GENTLEMAN IN AMERICA TO  
HIS FRIEND IN EUROPE ON  
WHITE-WASHING<sup>3</sup>

DEAR SIR,—The peculiar customs of every country appear to strangers awkward and absurd, but the inhabitants consider them as very proper and even necessary. Long habit imposes on the understanding, and reconciles it to any thing that is not manifestly pernicious or immediately destructive

The religion of a country is scarcely held in greater veneration than its established customs, and it is almost as difficult to produce an alteration in the one as in the other. Any interference of government for the reformation of national customs, however trivial and absurd they may be, never fails to produce the greatest discontent, and sometimes dangerous convulsions. Of this there are frequent instances in history. Bad habits are most safely removed by the same means that established them, viz, by imperceptible gradations and the constant example and influence of the higher class of the people.

We are apt to conclude that the fashions and manners of our own country are most rational and proper, because the eye and the under-

<sup>1</sup> proclamation forbidding town meetings in Boston  
<sup>2</sup> "The rest is missing" Hopkinson's narrative takes the story up to the eve of hostilities between America and England.  
<sup>3</sup> house-cleaning

<sup>1</sup> address to General Gage    <sup>2</sup> the Continental Congress

standing have long since been reconciled to them, and we ridicule or condemn those of other nations on account of their novelty; yet the foreigner will defend his national habits with at least as much plausibility as we can our own. The truth is that reason has little to do in the matter. Customs are for the most part arbitrary, and one nation has as good a right to fix its peculiarities as another. It is of no purpose to talk of convenience as a standard, 10 everything becomes convenient by practice and habit.

I have read somewhere of a nation (in Africa, I think) which is governed by twelve counsellors. When these counsellors are to meet on public business, twelve large earthen jars are set in two rows and filled with water. The counsellors enter the apartment one after another, stark naked, and each leaps into a jar, 20 where he sits up to the chin in water. When the jars are all filled with counsellors, they proceed to deliberate on the great concerns of the nation. This, to be sure, forms a very grotesque scene, but the object is to transact the public business they have been accustomed to do it in this way, and therefore it appears to them the most rational and convenient way. Indeed, if we consider it impartially, there seems to be no reason why a counsellor may not be as wise in an earthen jar as in an elbow 30 chair, or why the good of the people may not be as maturely considered in the one as in the other.

The established manners of every country are the standards of propriety with the people who have adopted them, and every nation assumes the right of considering all deviations therefrom as barbarisms and absurdities.

The Chinese have retained their laws and customs for ages immemorial; and although 40 they have long had a commercial intercourse with European nations, and are well acquainted with their improvements in the arts and their modes of civilization, yet they are so far from being convinced of any superiority in the European manners that their government takes the most serious measures to prevent the customs of foreigners taking root amongst them. It employs their utmost vigilance to enjoy the benefits of commerce, and at the 50 same time guard against innovations that

might affect the characteristic manners of the people.

Since the discovery of the Sandwich Islands in the South Sea, they have been visited by ships from several nations, yet the natives have shown no inclination to prefer the dress and manners of the visitors to their own. It is even probable that they pity the ignorance of the Europeans they have seen, as far removed 10 from civilization, and value themselves on the propriety and advantage of their own customs.

There is nothing new in these observations, and I had no intention of making them when I sat down to write, but they obtruded themselves upon me. My intention was to give you some account of the people of these new states; but I am not sufficiently informed for the purpose, having, as yet, seen little more than the cities of New York and Philadelphia. I have 20 discovered but few national singularities amongst them. Their customs and manners are nearly the same with those of England, which they have long been used to copy. For, previous to the late revolution, the Americans were taught from their infancy to look up to the English as the patterns of perfection in all things.

I have, however, observed one custom, which, for aught I know, is peculiar to this country. An account of it will serve to fill up the remainder of this sheet, and may afford 30 you some amusement.

When a young couple are about to enter on the matrimonial state, a never-failing article in the marriage treaty is, that the lady shall have and enjoy the free and unmolested rights of *white-washing*, with all its ceremonials, privileges, and appurtenances. You will wonder what this privilege of *white-washing* is. I 40 will endeavor to give you an idea of the ceremony, as I have seen it performed.

There is no season of the year in which the lady may not, if she pleases, claim her privilege; but the latter end of May is generally fixed upon for the purpose. The attentive husband may judge, by certain prognostics, when the storm is nigh at hand. If the lady grows uncommonly fretful, finds fault with the servants, is discontented with the children, 50 and complains much of the nastiness of everything about her: these are symptoms which

ought not to be neglected, yet they sometimes go off without any further effect. But if, when the husband rises in the morning, he should observe in the yard a wheelbarrow, with a quantity of lime in it, or should see certain buckets filled with a solution of lime in water, there is no time for hesitation. He immediately locks up the apartment or closet where his papers and private property are kept, and putting the key in his pocket, betakes himself to flight. A husband, however beloved, becomes a perfect nuisance during this season of female rage. His authority is superseded, his commission suspended, and the very scullion who cleans the brasses in the kitchen becomes of more importance than him. He has nothing for it but to abdicate, for a time, and run from an evil which he can neither prevent nor mollify.

The husband gone, the ceremony begins. The walls are stripped of their furniture—paintings, prints, and looking-glasses lie huddled in heaps about the floors, the curtains are torn from their testers, the beds crammed into windows, chairs and tables, bedsteads and cradles crowd the yard; and the garden fence bends beneath the weight of carpets, blankets, cloth cloaks, old coats, under petticoats, and ragged breeches. Here may be seen the lumber of the kitchen, forming a dark and confused mass for the foreground of the picture; grid-irons and frying-pans, rusty shovels and broken tongs, joint stools, and the fractured remains of rush-bottom chairs. There a closet has disgorged its bowels—riveted plates and dishes, halves of china bowls, cracked tumblers, broken wine-glasses, phials of forgotten physic, papers of unknown powders, seeds and dried herbs, tops of teapots, and stoppers of departed decanters—from the rag-hole in the garret, to the rat-hole in the cellar, no place escapes unrummaged. It would seem as if the day of general doom was come, and the utensils of the house were dragged forth to judgment. In this tempest, the words of King Lear unavoidably present themselves, and might with little alteration be made strictly applicable.

... Let the great gods

That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads  
Find out their enemies now. Tremble thou wretch

That hast within thee undivulged crimes  
Unwhipt of justice . . .

. . . Close pent up guilt,  
Rive your concealing continents, and ask  
These dreadful summoners grace.

This ceremony completed, and the house thoroughly evacuated, the next operation is to smear the walls and ceilings with brushes, dipped into a solution of lime called *whitewash*, to pour buckets of water over every floor, and scratch all the partitions and wainscots with hard brushes, charged with soft soap and stone-cutter's sand.

The windows by no means escape the general deluge. A servant scrambles out upon the pent-house, at the risk of her neck, and with a mug in her hand, and a bucket within reach, dashes innumerable gallons of water against the glass panes, to the great annoyance of passengers in the street.

I have been told that an action at law was once brought against one of these water nymphs, by a person who had a new suit of clothes spoiled by this operation, but after long argument it was determined that no damages could be awarded inasmuch as the defendant was in the exercise of a legal right, and not answerable for the consequences. So the poor gentleman was doubly nonsuited, for he lost both his suit of clothes and his suit at law.

These smearings and scratchings, these washings and dashings, being duly performed, the next ceremonial is to cleanse and replace the distracted furniture. You may have seen a house-raising, or a ship launch—recollect, if you can, the hurry, bustle, confusion, and noise of such a scene, and you will have some idea of this cleansing match. The misfortune is, that the sole object is to make things *clean*. It matters not how many useful, ornamental, or valuable articles suffer mutilation or death under the operation. A mahogany chair and a carved frame undergo the same discipline, they are to be made *clean* at all events, but their preservation is not worthy of attention. For instance: a fine large engraving is laid flat upon the floor, a number of smaller prints are piled upon it, until the super-incumbent weight cracks the lower glass—but this is of no importance. A valuable picture is placed

leaning against the sharp corner of a table, others are made to lean against that, till the pressure of the whole forces the corner of the table through the canvas of the first. The frame and glass of a fine print are to be cleaned, the spirit and oil used on this occasion are suffered to leak through and deface the engraving—no matter! If the glass is clean and the frame shines it is sufficient—the rest is not worthy of consideration. An able arithmetician hath 10 made a calculation, founded on long experience, and proved that the losses and destruction incident to two white-washings are equal to one removal, and three removals equal to one fire.

This cleansing frolic over, matters begin to resume their pristine appearance, the storm abates, and all would be well again, but it is impossible that so great a convulsion in so small a community should pass over without 20 producing some consequences. For two or three weeks after the operation, the family are usually afflicted with sore eyes, sore throats, or severe colds, occasioned by exhalations from wet floors and damp walls.

I know a gentleman here who is fond of accounting for everything in a philosophical way. He considers thus, what I call a *custom*, as a real, periodical disease, peculiar to the climate. His train of reasoning is whimsical 30 and ingenious, but I am not at leisure to give you the detail. The result was, that he found the distemper to be incurable, but after much study, he thought he had discovered a method to divert the evil he could not subdue. For this purpose, he caused a small building, about twelve feet square, to be erected in his garden, and furnished with some ordinary chairs and tables, and a few prints of the cheapest sort. His hope was that when the 40 white-washing frenzy seized the females of his family, they might repair to this apartment, and scrub, and scour, and smear to their hearts' content, and so spend the violence of the disease in this outpost, whilst he enjoyed himself in quiet at headquarters. But the experiment did not answer his expectation. It was impossible it should, since a principal part of the gratification consists in the lady's having an uncontrolled right to torment her husband, 50 at least once in every year; to turn him out of

doors, and take the reins of government into her own hands.

There is a much better contrivance than this of the philosopher's which is, to cover the walls of the house with paper. This is generally done. And though it does not abolish, it at least shortens the period of female dominion. This paper is decorated with various fancies, and made so ornamental that the women have admitted the fashion without perceiving the design.

There is also another alleviation of the husband's distress. He generally has the sole use of a small room or closet for his books and papers, the key of which he is allowed to keep. This is considered as a privileged place, even in the white-washing season, and stands like the land of Goshen amidst the plagues of Egypt. But then he must be extremely cautious, and ever upon his guard, for should he inadvertently go abroad, and leave the key in his door, the housemaid, who is always on the watch for such an opportunity, immediately enters in triumph with buckets, brooms, and brushes—takes possession of the premises, and forthwith puts all his books and papers 5 to *rights*, to his utter confusion, and sometimes serious detriment. I can give you an instance.

A gentleman was sued at law by the executors of a mechanic, on a charge found against him on the deceased's books to the amount of £30. The defendant was strongly impressed with a belief that he had discharged the debt and taken a receipt, but as the transaction was of long standing, he knew not where to find the receipt. The suit went on in course, and the time approached when judgment should be obtained against him. He then sat down seriously to examine a large bundle of old papers, which he had untied and displayed on a table for the purpose. In the midst of his search he was suddenly called away on business of importance. He forgot to lock the door of his room. The housemaid, who had been long looking for such an opportunity, immediately entered with the usual implements, and with great alacrity fell to cleaning the room and *putting things to rights*. One of the first objects that struck her eye was the confused situation of the papers on the table. These, without delay, she huddled together

like so many dirty knives and forks; but in the action, a small piece of paper fell unnoted on the floor, which unfortunately happened to be the very receipt in question. As it had no very respectable appearance, it was soon after swept out with the common dirt of the room, and carried in a dust-pan to the yard. The tradesman had neglected to enter the credit in his books. The defendant could find nothing to obviate the charge, and so judgment went against him for debt and costs. A fortnight after the whole was settled, and the money paid, one of the children found the receipt amongst the dirt in the yard.

There is also another custom, peculiar to the city of Philadelphia, and nearly allied with the former. I mean that of washing the pavements before the doors every Saturday evening. I at first supposed this to be a regulation of the police; but on further inquiry, I find it is a religious rite preparatory to the Sabbath, and it is, I believe, the only religious rite in which the numerous sectaries of this large city perfectly agree. The ceremony begins about sunset and continues till ten or eleven at night. It is very difficult for a stranger to walk the streets on those evenings. He runs a continual risk of having a bucket of dirty water dashed against his legs; but a Philadelphian born is so much accustomed to the danger that he avoids it with surprising dexterity. It is from this circumstance that a Philadelphian may be known anywhere by a certain skip in his gait.

The streets of New York are paved with rough stones. These, indeed, are not washed, but the dirt is so thoroughly swept from between them that they stand out sharp and prominent, to the great annoyance of those who are not accustomed to so rough a path. But habit reconciles everything. It is diverting enough to see a Philadelphian at New York. He walks the streets with as much painful caution as if his toes were covered with corns, or his feet lamed by the gout. whilst a New Yorker, as little approving the plain masonry of Philadelphia, shuffles along the pavement like a parrot upon a mahogany table.

It must be acknowledged that the ablutions I have mentioned are attended with no small inconvenience, yet the women would not be induced by any consideration to resign their privilege.

Notwithstanding this singularity, I can give you the strongest assurances that the women of America make the most faithful wives, and the most attentive mothers in the world. And I don't doubt but you will join me in opinion, that if a married man is made miserable only for one week in a whole year, he will have no great cause to complain of the matrimonial bond.

This letter has run to a length I did not expect, I therefore hasten to assure you that I am, as ever,

Your, &c &c &c.

1785

## 1736 ~ Patrick Henry ~ 1799

THOUGH THE SON of an aristocratic plantation owner, Patrick Henry represented the democratic sentiments of the small farmers of the Piedmont section in Virginia. After failing as storekeeper and planter, he studied law and through his brilliant mastery of that subject, but more through his knowledge of men and their emotions, became a most successful political organizer and pleader. In the Virginia House of Burgesses he led the action in support of the Massachusetts resistance to British measures with his famous "Caesar had his Brutus" and "Give me liberty or give me death" speeches. He suggested the first Continental Congress and a

declaration of independence, and was a member of the several congresses and war governor of Virginia, serving five separate terms. Independent, avid of power, and wayward, he pleaded the parsons' cause against the established clergy and later argued for a state-supported church; fought the adoption of the Constitution with determined persistence yet became late in life a Federalist candidate; organized with Jefferson and Madison the Antifederalist party in Virginia, but quarreled with them and lost local control of the Democratic party to them. Nearly always poor, and failing in health, he declined appointments as Secretary of State, Chief Justice, and envoy to France, offered him by Presidents Washington and Adams. He was as shrewd a political organizer and agitator in Virginia as Samuel Adams was in Massachusetts, and far outranked him as a public speaker, with great power of thrilling emotional climaxes.

None of Henry's great speeches were written out, and our record of them depends upon notes and recollection by William Wirt and minutes of the Virginia House of Burgesses and conventions. All biographies go back to Wirt's reminiscent *Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry* (1817). Full biographies are M. C. Tyler, *Patrick Henry* (1887), and W. W. Henry, *Patrick Henry, Life, Correspondence, and Speeches* (3 vols., 1891). See also J. Elliott, *The Debate on . . . the Federal Constitution*, II, (1828), H. B. Grigsby, *The Virginia Convention of 1776* (1855), and W. E. Dodd, "Virginia Takes the Road to Revolution," in *The Spirit of '76* (1927), by C. Becker, J. M. Clark, and W. E. Dodd.

#### SPEECH BEFORE THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION

Henry's address was made at an assembly convened at Richmond, March 20-26, 1775, to consider a resolution that the Province of Virginia "be immediately put into a position of defense." It was not recorded but reproduced from memory by William Wirt, who was present.

MR. PRESIDENT —

No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the house. But different men often see the same subject in different lights, and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the house is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the free-

dom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

10 Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes see not, and having ears hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but



by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years,<sup>1</sup> to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the house? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir: it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation—the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, What means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us. they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable, but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer.

Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated, we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded, and we

have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone, it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand

<sup>1</sup> the ministries of Rockingham (1765-6), Chatham (1766-70), and North (1770-82)

we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

1775

### DANGERS OF THE CONSTITUTION<sup>1</sup>

Not all Americans were enthusiastic regarding the benefits of the proffered constitution. Patrick Henry's objections call to mind the long-contested issue of state as opposed to popular sovereignty, and his fears of presidential usurpation, to which the United States has been perhaps temperamentally immune, have been repeatedly realized by its sister republics.

The honorable gentleman's observations respecting the people's right of being the agents in the formation of this government are not accurate, in my humble conception. The distinction between a national government and a confederacy is not sufficiently discerned. Had the delegates who were sent to Philadelphia a power to propose a consolidated government instead of a confederacy? Were they not deputed by states, and not by the people? The assent of the people in their collective capacity is not necessary to the formation of a federal government. The people have no right to enter into leagues, alliances, or confederations, they are not the proper agents for this purpose, states and sovereign powers are the only proper agents for this kind of government. Show me an instance where the people have exercised this business, has it not always gone through the legislatures? I refer you to the treaties with France, Holland, and other nations: how were they made? Were they not made by the states? Are the people therefore, in their aggregate capacity, the proper persons to form a confederacy? Thus, therefore, ought to depend on the consent of the legislatures, the people having never sent delegates to make any proposition of changing the government. Yet I must say, at the same time, that it was made on grounds the most pure, and perhaps I

might have been brought to consent to it so far as to the change of government; but there is one thing in it which I never would acquiesce in. I mean the changing it into a consolidated government, which is so abhorrent to my mind.

The honorable gentleman then went on to the figure we make with foreign nations, the contemptible one we make in France and Holland, which, according to the substance of my notes, he attributes to the present feeble government. An opinion has gone forth, we find, that we are a contemptible people: the time has been when we were thought otherwise. Under this same despised government, we commanded the respect of all Europe: wherefore are we now reckoned otherwise? The American spirit has fled from hence, it has gone to regions where it has never been expected, it has gone to the people of France in search of a splendid government—a strong, energetic government. Shall we imitate the example of those nations who have gone from a simple to a splendid government? Are those nations more worthy of our imitation? What can make an adequate satisfaction to them for the loss they have suffered in attaining such a government—for the loss of their liberty? If we admit this consolidated government, it will be because we like a great, splendid one. Some way or other we must be a great and mighty empire, we must have an army, and a navy, and a number of things. When the American spirit was in its youth, the language of America was different. liberty, sir, was then the primary object. We are descended from a people whose government was founded on liberty: our glorious forefathers of Great Britain made liberty the foundation of every thing. That country is become a great, mighty, and splendid nation, not because their government is strong and energetic, but, sir, because liberty is its direct end and foundation. We drew the spirit of liberty from our British ancestors, by that spirit we have triumphed over every difficulty. But now, sir, the American spirit, assisted by the ropes and chains of consolidation, is about to convert this country into a powerful and mighty empire, if you make the citizens of this country agree to become the subjects of one great consolidated empire of America, your

<sup>1</sup> From the shorthand report of the Virginia Convention of 1788.

government will not have sufficient energy to keep them together, such a government is incompatible with the genius of republicanism. There will be no checks, no real balances, in this government. What can avail your specious, imaginary balances, your rope-dancing, chain-rattling, ridiculous ideal checks and contrivances? But, sir, we are not feared by foreigners; we do not make nations tremble. Would this constitute happiness, or secure liberty? I trust, sir, our political hemisphere will ever direct their operations to the security of those objects.

Consider our situation, sir go to the poor man; ask him what he does, he will inform you that he enjoys the fruits of his labor, under his own fig-tree, with his wife and children around him, in peace and security Go to every other member of the society; you will find the same tranquil ease and content; you will find no alarms or disturbances! Why, then, tell us of dangers to terrify us into an adoption of this new form of government? And yet who knows the dangers that this new system may produce? They are out of the sight of the common people, they cannot foresee latent consequences. I dread the operation of it on the muddling and lower classes of people, it is for them I fear the adoption of this system. I fear I tire the patience of the committee, but I beg to be indulged with a few more observations. When I thus profess myself an advocate for the liberty of the people, I shall be told I am a designing man, that I am to be a great man, that I am to be a demagogue; and many similar iliberal insinuations will be thrown out, but, sir, conscious rectitude outweighs these things with me. I see great jeopardy in this new government I see none from our present one. I hope some gentleman or other will bring forth, in full array, those dangers, if there be any, that we may see and touch them.

This constitution is said to have beautiful features; but when I come to examine these features, sir, they appear to me horribly frightful: among other deformities it has an awful squinting; it squints toward monarchy; and does not this raise indignation in the breast of every true American? Your president may easily become king; your senate is so imper-

fectly constructed that your dearest rights may be sacrificed by what may be a small minority; and a very small minority may continue forever unchangeably this government although horridly defective. Where are your checks in this government? Your strongholds will be in the hands of your enemies; it is on a supposition that your American governors shall be honest, that all the good qualities of this government are founded, but its defective and imperfect construction puts it in their power to perpetrate the worst of mischiefs, should they be bad men, and, sir, would not all the world, from the eastern to the western hemisphere, blame our distracted folly in resting our rights upon the contingency of our rulers' being good or bad? Show me that age and country where the rights and liberties of the people were placed on the sole chance of their rulers' being good men, without a consequent loss of liberty? I say that the loss of that dearest privilege has ever followed with absolute certainty every such mad attempt.

If your American chief be a man of ambition and abilities, how easy it is for him to render himself absolute! The army is in his hands, and if he be a man of address, it will be attached to him, and it will be the subject of meditation with him to seize the first auspicious moment to accomplish his design, and, sir, will the American spirit solely relieve you when this happens? I would rather infinitely—and I am sure most of this convention are of the same opinion—have a king, lords, and commons, than a government so replete with such insupportable evils. If we make a king, we may prescribe the rules by which he shall rule his people, and interpose such checks as shall prevent him from infringing them; but the president in the field at the head of his army can prescribe the terms on which he shall reign master, so far that it will puzzle any American ever to get his neck from under the galling yoke. I cannot with patience think of this idea. If ever he violates the laws, one of two things will happen he will come at the head of his army to carry everything before him; or he will give bail, or do what Mr. Chief Justice will order him. If he be guilty, will not the recollection of his crimes teach him to make one bold push for the American throne?

Will not the immense difference between being master of everything and being ignominiously tried and punished, powerfully excite him to make this bold push? But, sir, where is the existing force to punish him? Can he not at the head of his army beat down every opposition? Away with your president, we shall

have a king: the army will salute him monarch; your militia will leave you and assist in making him king, and fight against you, and what have you to oppose this force? What will then become of you and your rights? Will not absolute despotism ensue?

1788

## 1737 -- Thomas Paine -- 1809

THOMAS PAINE was born in England of a Quaker family, whose objections to organized religion and difference in social rank greatly affected his thinking throughout life. His education was gained not from schools but from a wide reading in books which increased his impatience with the structure of society, and from writing and debating in a men's literary club in London. He was middle-aged and had been unsuccessful as a sailor, corsetmaker, exciseman, schoolteacher, and tobacconist and grocer—and in matrimony—before he attracted the attention of Franklin, who suggested migration to America. He went to Philadelphia in 1774 and immediately established the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, which during its single year included a number of liberal articles on slavery, divorce, and politics. Enthusiastically adopting the colonists' quarrel, he published early in 1776, in a time of hesitation, his tract *Common Sense*, arguing the political necessity and economic desirability of separation from England. Half a million copies were circulated throughout the colonies, and its effect upon its readers, including the conservative Washington, was a great impetus in the direction of the Declaration of Independence. The ensuing *The Crisis* was a series of sixteen essays issued at moments of wavering and discouragement during the course of the war, to arouse and revive the spirits of the people. Together, *Common Sense* and *The Crisis* were two of the most influential propaganda documents in American history.

Paine came out of the war a national hero, with the liking and gratitude of the American people, Pennsylvania granted him a gift of £500, and New York, a confiscated estate in New Rochelle. In 1787 he returned to England, and the next fifteen years were spent abroad. In Europe he considered himself, like many Americans, a missionary for democratic ideas: in a later edition of *Common Sense* he asserted, "We have it in our power to make the world over again." To the young liberals in England, who welcomed the French Revolution, Paine addressed, in response to Burke's attacks in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), his indignant *The Rights of Man* (1791 and 1792), assailing the political theory of the British monarchy with its titled nobility and arguing for the welfare of the masses.

As a result he was tried for treason and banished, but he was already in France. At first he was welcomed with citizenship and a seat in the National Assembly, but during the Terror was imprisoned and in danger of death until released in 1794, through the intervention of Monroe. By his tactless *Letter to George Washington* (1796), in which he accused the President of duplicity and over-conservatism, he lost many friends in America.

Up to 1794 Paine's writings had chiefly been political and economic. In that year he began, in his famous work *The Age of Reason* (in two parts, 1794 and 1796), his assault upon "superstition," or organized religion, which he found everywhere interwoven with and helping to support governmental tyranny. On the positive side the book embodied his exposition of deistic theology. Discarding all respect for ecclesiastical tradition and viewing the authority of the Scriptures with the eyes of critical reason only, he undertook with merciless plainness and sarcasm to undermine the ground on which the established Christian, Jewish, and Mohammedan religious systems were founded. Upon their ruins he hoped to set up the religion of reason and nature, "lest in the general wreckage of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true." His ideas, drawn from Newtonian astronomy with its stress on a universe of immutable law and harmony, affected the thinking of many intellectuals, already stirred by currents of revolutionary thought, through its rational appeal, expressed in powerful phrase, as in the following:

Is it we that light up the sun, that pour down the rain, and fill the earth with abundance? Whether we sleep or wake, the vast machinery of the universe still goes on. Are these things, and the blessings they indicate in future, nothing to us? Can our gross feelings be excited by no other subjects than tragedy and suicide? Or is the gloomy pride of man become so intolerable that nothing can flatter it but a sacrifice of the Creator?

His religious views were actually not unlike those of many who consider themselves liberal Christians today, but he alienated many thoughtful readers by needlessly tactlessness and occasional scurrility regarding matters ordinarily held sacred. The orthodox clergy of all sects in the United States recognized the menace in his work, and Paine was denounced from the pulpits everywhere as an atheist, traitor, and drunkard. In 1802, when, broken by illness and intemperance, he returned to his New York farm at the invitation of President Jefferson, he was greeted with obloquy and intolerant abuse. He lived rather obscurely at New Rochelle until his death in 1809, and it was nearly a century before the real impulse that he had given to political and religious liberalism could be impartially estimated.

Moncure D. Conway has produced the standard edition of Paine's *Works* (4 vols., 1894-1896) and the standard *Life* (2 vols., 1892). See also the ten-volume *Life and Works* by W. M. Van der Weyde (1925) and the volume of selections by A. W. Peach (American Authors Series, 1928).

Other biographies include M. A. Best, *Thomas Paine, Prophet and Martyr of Democracy* (1927); James Cheetham, *Life of Thomas Paine* (1809); F. J. Gould, *Thomas Paine* (1925), and Ellery Sedgwick, *Thomas Paine* (1899). Good brief sketches are contained in the *DAB* and *DNB*.

Critical and interpretative studies are H. H. Clark, "An Historical Interpretation of Thomas Paine's Religion," *University of California Chronicle*, XXXV, 56-87 (January, 1933), "Thomas Paine's Theories of Rhetoric," *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, XXVIII, 307-339 (1933), and "Toward a Reinterpretation of Thomas Paine," *American Literature*, V, 133-145 (May, 1933); W. E. Dodd, "Tom Paine," *American Mercury*, XXI, 477-483 (December, 1930); C. E. Merriam, Jr., "Thomas Paine's Political Theories," *Political Science Quarterly*, XIV, 389-403 (September, 1899); D. S. Muzzey, "Thomas Paine and American Independence," *American Review*, IV, 278-288 (May-June, 1926), V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927), I, 327-341; C. E. Persinger, "The Political Philosophy of Thomas Paine," *University of Nebraska Graduate Bulletin*, 6th ser., No. 3, 54-74 (July, 1901); Frank Smith, "New Light on Thomas Paine's First Year in America," *American Literature*, I, 347-371 (January, 1930), N. Sykes, "Thomas Paine," in *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era*, F. J. C. Hearnshaw, ed. (1931), 100-140, M. C. Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution* (1897), I, 451-474 and II, 35-49; and Carl Van Doren, "Paine," in *American Writers on American Literature*, John Macy, ed., (1931), 25-35.

#### From THE CRISIS

##### *The Times That Try Men's Souls*

The first number of *The American Crisis*, with its magnificent opening sentences, was written in camp, near the close of the first year of the war, when a series of military disasters had made it seem to many that the Revolution, despite Washington's skill and leadership, was doomed to swift failure. It was printed in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, Philadelphia, on December 19, 1776, and republished separately on December 23, the day before Washington's victory at Trenton, in which Paine participated.

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered, yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods, and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right not only to tax but "to

bind us in all cases whatsoever," and if being bound in that manner is not slavery, then there is not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument, my own simple opinion is that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependent state. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own; we have none to blame but ourselves. But no great deal is lost yet. All that Howe<sup>1</sup> has been doing for this month past, is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys, a year ago, would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupported to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I

<sup>1</sup> Lord William Howe, general of the British forces at New York.

so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to Heaven for help against us. a common murderer, a highwayman, or a housebreaker, has as good a pretence as he.

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All nations and ages have been subject to them: Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat-bottomed boats, and in the fourteenth century the whole English army, after ravaging the kingdom of France, was driven back like men petrified with fear; and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman, Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment! Yet panics, in some cases, have their uses; they produce as much good as hurt. Their duration is always short; the mind soon grows through them, and acquires a firmer habit than before. But their peculiar advantage is, that they are the touchstones of sincerity and hypocrisy, and bring things and men to light, which might otherwise have lain forever undiscovered. In fact, they have the same effect on secret traitors which an imaginary apparition would have upon a private murderer. They sift out the hidden thoughts of man, and hold them up in public to the world. Many a disguised tory has lately shown his head, that shall penitentially solemnize with curses the day on which Howe arrived upon the Delaware.

As I was with the troops at Fort Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances, which those who live at a distance know but little or nothing of. Our situation there was exceedingly cramped, the place being a narrow neck of land between the North River and the Hackensack. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one fourth so great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up and stood on our defence. Our ammunition, light artillery, and

the best part of our stores, had been removed, on the apprehension that Howe would endeavor to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case Fort Lee could be of no use to us; for it must occur to every thinking man, whether in the army or not, that these kind of field forts are only for temporary purposes, and last in use no longer than the enemy directs his force against the particular object which such forts are raised to defend. Such was our situation and condition at Fort Lee on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information that the enemy with 200 boats had landed about seven miles above. Major General Green, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent express to General Washington at the town of Hackensack, distant by the way of the ferry, six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackensack, which laid up the river between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, and three from them. General Washington arrived in about three quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of the troops towards the bridge, which place I expected we should have a brush for, however, they did not choose to dispute it with us, and the greatest part of our troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain, the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison, and march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, so as to be enabled to make a stand. We stayed four days at Newark, collected our outposts with some of the Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy, on being informed that they were advancing, though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. Howe, in my little opinion, committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten Island through Amboy, by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick, and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania, but if we believe the power of hell to be limited, we must like-

wise believe that their agents are under some providential control.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware; suffice it for the present to say, that both officers and men, though greatly harassed and fatigued, frequently without rest, covering, or provision, the inevitable consequences of a long retreat, bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centered in one, which was, that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back. Voltaire has remarked that King William<sup>1</sup> never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action, the same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortune, and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings, which we do not immediately see, that God hath blessed him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs, and shall begin with asking the following question, Why is it that the enemy have left the New England provinces, and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy. New England is not infested with tories, and we are. I have been tender in raising the cry against these men, and used numberless arguments to show them their danger, but it will not do to sacrifice a world either to their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived, in which either they or we must change our sentiments, or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good God! what is he? I should not be afraid to go with a hundred whigs against a thousand tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of toryism, and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave.

But, before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us, let us reason the matter together: Your conduct is an invitation

to the enemy, yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him. Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you. He expects you will all take up arms, and flock to his standard, with muskets on your shoulders. Your opinions are of no use to him, unless you support him personally, for 'tis soldiers, and not tories, that he wants.

I once felt all that kind of anger which a man ought to feel, against the mean principles that are held by the tories. a noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as ever I saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "*Well! give me peace in my day*" Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent should have said, "*If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace*"; and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America. Her situation is remote from all the wrangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them. A man can distinguish himself between temper and principle, and I am as confident, as I am that God governs the world, that America will never be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion. Wars, without ceasing, will break out till that period arrives, and the continent must in the end be conqueror, for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine, the coal can never expire. . . .

1776

#### From COMMON SENSE

#### *Thoughts on the Present State of American Affairs*

As early as October 18, 1775, Paine had prophesied the separation of the American colonies from England, in an article in the *Pennsylvania Journal*. Less than three months later, early in January, he published *Common Sense*, setting forth the reasons for and advantages of independence. The following extract is a portion of Part III of the pamphlet.

<sup>1</sup> William of Orange, later William III of England, defender of Holland against the French armies



In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves, that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs, but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the King, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It has been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who, though an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the House of Commons, on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "they will last my time." Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent — of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seedtime of continental union, faith, and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak, the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new area for politics is struck, a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, etc., prior to the nineteenth of April, i.e., to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacs of last year; which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the

advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz., a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first has failed, and the second has withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependent on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependence, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependent.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The articles of commerce by which she has enriched herself, are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motives, viz., for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was interest not attachment; and that she did not protect us from our enemies on

our account, but from her enemies on her own account, from those who had no quarrel with us on any other account, and who will always be our enemies on the same account. Let Britain waive her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependence, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover's last war ought to warn us against connections.<sup>1</sup>

It hath lately been asserted in Parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, i.e., that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England, this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as Americans, but as our being the subjects of Great Britain

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families, wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach, but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase, *parent or mother country*, hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical<sup>2</sup> design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe and not England is the parent country of America. This new World hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the Globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian,

and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of neighbor; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of townsman; if he travel out of the county, and meets him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him countryman, i.e., county-man; but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France or any other part of Europe, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of Englishmen. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are countrymen; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller one, distinctions too limited, for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province,<sup>3</sup> are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of *parent or mother country* applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow, and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title, and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean anything; for this continent would never suffer

<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Hanover, in Germany, subject to the English Georges, was ravaged by the French armies during the French and Indian War, 1756-1763. <sup>2</sup> used in the sense of *crafty*

<sup>3</sup> Pennsylvania

itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

"Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a free port. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn<sup>1</sup> will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance, because any submission to or dependence on Great Britain tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels, and sets us at variance with nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while, by her dependence on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, because of her connection with Britain. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality, in that case, would be a safer convey than a man-of-war. Everything that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, "'Tis time to part." Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England

and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety. . . .

1776

### From THE AGE OF REASON

Early impressed with the Newtonian non-geocentric conception of the universe and with certain apparent inconsistencies in the Scriptures, Paine was for two years closely associated at Philadelphia with Franklin and Dr Thomas Young, a pronounced deist and probably the principal author of *Reason the Only Oracle of Man* (1784), which Paine may have seen in manuscript. The numerous parallels in content between this and *The Age of Reason*, however, are probably inherent in the subject and not due to Young's influence. Paine had finished the first part of *The Age of Reason* late in December, 1793, just before being imprisoned by the radical administration in France. Within a month, the first part of *The Age of Reason* was in print. Part II was published in 1795, after his release, and an "Answer to the Bishop of Llandaff," sometimes called Part III, appeared in 1807.

### [Thoughts upon Religion]

It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and, from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations, and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France,<sup>1</sup> of the total abolition of the whole

<sup>1</sup> The Roman Catholic religion had been disestablished, and the Commons had set up the worship of Reason in France.

<sup>1</sup> grain

national order of priesthood and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France, have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine, and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy.

But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

All national institutions of churches—whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish—appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind and monopolize power and profit.

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe.

It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional be-

lief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and, in order to *qualify* himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive anything more destructive to morality than this?

Soon after I had published the pamphlet, *Common Sense*, in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a Revolution in the System of Government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of church and state, wherever it had taken place, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, had so effectually prohibited, by pains and penalties, every discussion upon established creeds, and upon first principles of religion, that until the system of government should be changed those subjects could not be brought fairly and openly before the world, but that whenever this should be done, a revolution in the system of religion would follow. Human inventions and priest-craft would be detected, and man would return to the pure, unmix'd, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more.

Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints, and the Turks their Mahomet—as if the way to God was not open to every man alike.

Each of those churches show certain books which they call *revelation*, or the word of God. The Jews say that their word of God was given by God to Moses face to face, the Christians say that their word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say that their word of God (the *Koran*) was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuses the other of unbelief; and for my own part, I disbelieve them all.

As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some observations on the word *revelation*. Revelation, when applied to religion, means something communicated *immediately* from God to man.

No one will deny or dispute the power of

the Almighty to make such a communication, if he pleases. But admitting, for the sake of a case, that something has been revealed to a certain person, and not revealed to any other person, it is revelation to that person only. When he tells it to a second person, a second to a third, a third to a fourth, and so on, it ceases to be a revelation to all those persons. It is a revelation to the first person only, and *hearsay* to every other, and, consequently, they are not obliged to believe it.

It is a contradiction in terms and ideas to call anything a revelation that comes to us at secondhand, either verbally or in writing. Revelation is necessarily limited to the first communication. After this, it is only an account of something which that person says was a revelation made to him, and though he may find himself obliged to believe it, it cannot be incumbent upon me to believe it in the same manner, for it was not a revelation to me, and I have only his word for it that it was made to him.

When Moses told the children of Israel that he received the two tables of the commandments from the hand of God, they were not obliged to believe him, because they had no other authority for it than his telling them so, and I have no other authority for it than some historian telling me so. The commandments carry no internal evidence of divinity with them. They contain some good moral precepts,<sup>1</sup> such as any man qualified to be a lawgiver, or a legislator, could produce himself, without having recourse to supernatural intervention.

When I am told that the Koran was written in heaven, and brought to Mahomet by an angel, the account comes to near the same kind of hearsay evidence and secondhand authority as the former. I did not see the angel myself, and therefore I have a right not to believe it.

When also I am told that a woman, called the Virgin Mary said, or gave out, that she was with child without any cohabitation with a man, and that her betrothed husband,

Joseph, said, that an angel told him so, I have a right to believe them or not; such a circumstance required a much stronger evidence than their bare word for it; but we have not even this; for neither Joseph nor Mary wrote any such matter themselves. It is only reported by others that *they said so*. It is hearsay upon hearsay, and I do not choose to rest my belief upon such evidence.

It is, however, not difficult to account for the credit that was given to the story of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. He was born at a time when the heathen mythology had still some fashion and repute in the world, and that mythology had prepared the people for the belief of such a story. Almost all the extraordinary men that lived under the heathen mythology were reputed to be the sons of some of their gods. It was not a new thing, at that time, to believe a man to have been celestially begotten; the intercourse of gods with women was then a matter of familiar opinion. Their Jupiter, according to their accounts, had cohabited with hundreds, the story therefore had nothing in it either new, wonderful, or obscene; it was conformable to the opinions that then prevailed among the people called Gentiles, or mythologists, and it was those people only that believed it. The Jews, who had kept strictly to the belief of one God and no more, and who had always rejected the heathen mythology, never credited the story.

It is curious to observe how the theory of what is called the Christian church sprung out of the tail of the heathen mythology. A direct incorporation took place, in the first instance, by making the reputed founder to be celestially begotten. The trinity of gods that then followed was no other than a reduction of the former plurality, which was about twenty or thirty thousand. The statue of Mary succeeded the statue of Diana of Ephesus. The deification of heroes changed into the canonization of saints. The mythologists had gods for everything; the Christian mythologists had saints for everything. The church became as crowded with the one as the pantheon had been with the other; and Rome was the place of both. The Christian theory is little else than the idolatry of the ancient

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, necessary to except the declaration which says that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children. This is contrary to every principle of moral justice [*Paine's note*]

mythologists, accommodated to the purposes of power and revenue; and it yet remains to reason and philosophy to abolish the amphibious fraud.

Nothing that is here said can apply, even with the most distant disrespect, to the real character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and an amiable man. The morality that he preached and practiced was of the most benevolent kind, and though similar systems 10 of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek philosophers, many years before, by the Quakers since, and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any

Jesus Christ wrote no account of himself, of his birth, parentage, or anything else. Not a line of what is called the New Testament is of his writing. The history of him is altogether the work of other people, and as to the account given of his resurrection and ascension, 20 it was the necessary counterpart to the story of his birth. His historians, having brought him into the world in supernatural manner, were obliged to take him out again in the same manner, or the first part of the story must have fallen to the ground

The wretched contrivance with which this latter part is told exceeds everything that went before it. The first part, that of the miraculous conception, was not a thing that admitted of publicity; and therefore the tellers of this part of the story, had this advantage, that though they might not be credited they could not be detected. They could not be expected to prove it, because it was not one of those things that admitted of proof, and it was impossible that the person of whom it was told could prove it himself

But the resurrection of a dead person from 40 the grave, and his ascension through the air, is a thing very different, as to the evidence it admits of, to the invisible conception of a child in the womb. The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noonday, to all Jerusalem at least. A thing which everybody is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it 50 should be equal to all, and universal; and as

the public visibility of this last related act was the only evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground because that evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world, to say they saw it, and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it. But it appears that Thomas did not believe the resurrection, and, as they say, would not believe without having ocular and manual demonstration himself. *So neither will I,* and the reason is equally as good for me, and for every other person, as for Thomas

It is in vain to attempt to palliate or disguise this matter. The story, so far as relates to the supernatural part, has every mark of fraud and imposition stamped upon the face of it. Who were the authors of it is as impossible for us now to know, as it is for us to be assured that the books in which the account is related were written by the persons whose names they bear. The best surviving evidence we now have respecting this affair is the Jews. They are regularly descended from the people who lived in the times this resurrection and ascension is said to have happened, and they say, *it is not true.* It has long appeared to me a strange inconsistency to cite the Jews as a proof of the truth of the story. It is the same as if a man were to say, I will prove the truth of what I have told you by producing the people who say it is false

That such a person as Jesus Christ existed, and that he was crucified, which was the mode of execution at that day, are historical relations strictly within the limits of probability. He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man, but he preached also against the corruptions and avarice of the Jewish priests; and thus brought upon him the hatred and vengeance of the whole order of priesthood. The accusation which those priests brought against him was that of sedition and conspiracy against the Roman government, to which the Jews were then subject and tributary; and it is not improbable that the Roman government might have some secret apprehension of the effects of his doctrine as well as the Jewish priests; neither is it improbable that Jesus Christ had in contemplation the

delivery of the Jewish nation from the bondage of the Romans. Between the two, however, this virtuous reformer and revolutionist lost his life.

But some perhaps will say: Are we to have no word of God—no revelation? I answer: Yes, there is a word of God, there is a revelation.

THE WORD OF GOD IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD; and it is in *this word*, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaketh universally to man.

Human language is local and changeable, and is therefore incapable of being used as the means of unchangeable and universal information. The idea that God sent Jesus Christ to publish, as they say, the glad tidings to all nations, from one end of the earth unto the other, is consistent only with the ignorance of those who knew nothing of the extent of the world, and who believed, as those world-saviors believed and continued to believe for several centuries (and that in contradiction to the discoveries of philosophers and the experience of navigators), that the earth was flat like a trencher, and that a man might walk to the end of it.

But how was Jesus Christ to make anything known to all nations? He could speak but one language, which was Hebrew; and there are in the world several hundred languages. Scarcely any two nations speak the same language, or understand each other; and as to translations, every man who knows anything of languages knows that it is impossible to translate from one language into another, not only without losing a great part of the original, but frequently of mistaking the sense, and, besides all this, the art of printing was wholly unknown at the time Christ lived.

It is always necessary that the means that are to accomplish any end be equal to the accomplishment of that end, or the end cannot be accomplished. It is in this that the difference between finite and infinite power and wisdom discovers itself. Man frequently fails in accomplishing his ends from a natural inability of the power to the purpose; and frequently from the want of wisdom to apply

power properly. But it is impossible for infinite power and wisdom to fail as man faileth. The means it useth are always equal to the end; but human language, more especially as there is not a universal language, is incapable of being used as a universal means of unchangeable and uniform information; and therefore it is not the means that God useth in manifesting himself universally to man.

It is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of a *word of God* can unite. The creation speaketh a universal language, independently of human speech or human languages, multiplied and various as they be. It is an ever existing original which every man can read. It cannot be forged, it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be lost, it cannot be altered; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds; and this *word of God* reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of God.

Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible Whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful. In fine, do we want to know what God is? Search not the book called the scripture, which any human hand might make, but the scripture called the Creation.

The only idea man can affix to the name of God is that of a *first cause*, the cause of all things. And, incomprehensibly difficult as it is for man to conceive what a first cause is, he arrives at the belief of it from the tenfold greater difficulty of disbelieving it. It is difficult beyond description to conceive that space can have no end, but it is more difficult to conceive an end. It is difficult beyond the power of man to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time; but it is more impossible to conceive a time when there shall be no time. In like manner of reasoning, everything we behold carries in itself the internal evidence

that it did not make itself. Every man is an evidence to himself that he did not make himself; neither could his father make himself, nor his grandfather, nor any of his race, neither could any tree, plant, or animal make itself, and it is the conviction arising from this evidence that carries us on, as it were, by necessity, to the belief of a first cause eternally existing, of a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by the power of which all things exist; and thus first cause, man calls God.

It is only by the exercise of reason that man can discover God. Take away that reason and he would be incapable of understanding anything; and, in this case, it would be just as consistent to read even the book called the Bible to a horse as to a man. How then is it that those people pretend to reject reason?

My father being of the Quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceeding good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school, I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the Quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school.

The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent, for poetry, but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination. As soon as I was able, I purchased a pair of globes, and attended the philosophical lectures of Martin and Ferguson, and became afterwards acquainted with Dr Bevis, of the society called the Royal Society, then living in the Temple, and an excellent astronomer.

I had no disposition for what is called politics. It presented to my mind no other idea than is contained in the word *Jockeyship*. When, therefore, I turned my thoughts towards matters of government, I had to form a system for myself that accorded with the moral and philosophic principles in which I had been educated. I saw, or at least I thought I saw, a

vast scene opening itself to the world in the affairs of America; and it appeared to me that, unless the Americans changed the plan they were then pursuing with respect to the government of England, and declared themselves independent, they would not only involve themselves in a multiplicity of new difficulties, but shut out the prospect that was then offering itself to mankind through their means. It was from these motives that I published the work known by the name of *Common Sense*, which is the first work I ever did publish; and so far as I can judge of myself, I believe I should never have been known in the world as an author on any subject whatever, had it not been for the affairs of America. I wrote *Common Sense* the latter end of the year 1775, and published it the first of January, 1776. Independence was declared the fourth of July following.

Any person who has made observations on the state and progress of the human mind, by observing his own, cannot but have observed that there are two distinct classes of what are called Thoughts: those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat those voluntary visitors with civility, taking care to examine, as well I was able, if they were worth entertaining, and it is from them I have acquired almost all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any person gains from school education, it serves only like a small capital, to put him in the way of beginning learning for himself afterwards. Every person of learning is finally his own teacher, the reason of which is, that principles, being of a distinct quality to circumstances, cannot be impressed upon the memory, their place of mental residence is the understanding, and they are never so lasting as when they begin by conception. Thus much for the introductory part.

From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system or thought it to be a strange affair, I scarcely knew which it was: but I well remember, when about seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read by a relation of



mine, who was a great devotee of the church, upon the subject of what is called *Redemption by the Death of the Son of God*. After the sermon was ended, I went into the garden, and as I was going down the garden steps (for I perfectly recollect the spot) I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard, and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son when he could not revenge himself any other way; and as I was sure a man would be hanged that did such a thing, I could not see for what purpose they preached such sermons. This was not one of that kind of thoughts that had anything in it of childish levity, it was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea I had that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it. I believe in the same manner to this moment; and I moreover believe that any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child cannot be a true system

It seems as if parents of the Christian profession were ashamed to tell their children anything about the principles of their religion. They sometimes instruct them in morals, and talk to them of the goodness of what they call Providence; for the Christian mythology has five deities—there is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the God Provi-

dence, and the Goddess Nature. But the Christian story of God the Father putting his son to death, or employing people to do it (for that is the plain language of the story), cannot be told by a parent to a child; and to tell him that it was done to make mankind happier and better is making the story still worse; as if mankind could be improved by the example of murder, and to tell him that all this is a mystery is only making an excuse for the incredibility of it.

How different is this to the pure and simple profession of Deism! The true Deist has but one Deity, and his religion consists in contemplating the power, wisdom, and benignity of the Deity in his works, and in endeavoring to imitate him in everything moral, scientific, and mechanical

The religion that approaches the nearest of all others to true Deism, in the moral and benign part thereof, is that professed by the Quakers, but they have contracted themselves too much by leaving the works of God out of their system. Though I reverence their philanthropy, I cannot help smiling at the conceit that if the taste of a Quaker could have been consulted at the creation, what a silent and drab-colored creation it would have been! Not a flower would have blossomed its gaudies, nor a bird been permitted to sing

1794

## Thomas Young and Ethan Allen

THE MOST NOTABLE deistic treatise written in eighteenth-century America, *Reason the Only Oracle of Man*, was published at Brattleboro, Vermont, in 1784, as the work of Colonel Ethan Allen (1738–1789), of Revolutionary fame. There seems to be good reason to believe, however, that Allen's part in the book was confined to completing and seeing through the press a manuscript left by Dr. Thomas Young (1732–1777), though Allen may have collaborated slightly in its early stages. Dr. Young, a native of New Windsor, New York, was for several years a physician in Dutchess County, New York; lived from 1768 to 1774 in Boston, where he was closely connected with Dr. Joseph Warren and Samuel Adams and delivered the first anniversary address on the Boston Massacre; and

died in June, 1777, in Philadelphia, where he was intimately associated with Thomas Paine and other patriot leaders and served as hospital surgeon for the Continental Army. He was also author of a long poem in honor of General Wolfe and numerous articles contributed to the *Royal Magazine* at Boston in 1774. The *Oracles of Reason*, as the work was generally called, was probably undertaken as a challenge to orthodox Calvinistic theology as set forth in a number of "Questions" pronounced by Jonathan Edwards during his brief incumbency as president of Princeton in 1758. Allen, during the next few years, was living at Salisbury, Connecticut, not far from Dr. Young; was closely associated with him; and was actively sympathetic, as a youth of vigorous and inquiring mind, with his deistic views. After Young's death, Allen is said to have obtained the manuscript from his widow and, perhaps with the aid of a "young college graduate, a school-leader," completed and published it. The few copies that survived a fire in the printer's shop did not win for Allen the literary fame which he hoped to gain, but provoked the New England clergy to charges of atheism. The fact that a bolt of lightning was the cause of the fire was regarded as a divine judgment.

The book was not merely a rationalistic attack upon religious orthodoxy but an ambitious design to set forth a systematized theology based upon deistic principles. Its influence was restricted by its limited circulation, but the later deists used it in their attempts to establish a deistic "church" in New York State.

*Reason the Only Oracle of Man*, ed John Pell, is available in Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints For Dr. Young's life, see H E Edes, "Memor of Dr. Thomas Young, 1731-1777," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XI, 2-54 (1910), the *DAB* article by G P. Anderson, and J. S. Loring, *The Hundred Boston Orators* (1852). For Ethan Allen, see John Pell, *Ethan Allen* (1929), A. M. Hemenway, *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I, 560-571 (1867); for bibliography, M. D. Gilman, *Bibliography of Vermont* (1897). See also C. W. Rife, "Ethan Allen. An Interpretation," *New England Quarterly*, II, 581-582 (October, 1929); G A Koch, *Republican Religion* (1933), 79 ff, and B T Schantz, "Ethan Allen's Religious Ideas," *Journal of Religion*, XVIII, 183-217. See also G. P. Anderson, "Who Wrote Ethan Allen's Bible?" *New England Quarterly*, X, 685-696 (December, 1937) and Dana Doten, "Ethan Allen's 'Original Something,'" *ibid.*, XI, 361-366 (June, 1938).

## From REASON THE ONLY ORACLE OF MAN

### CHAPTER II, SECTION VII

#### *Of the Eternity and Infinitude of Divine Providence*

WHEN we consider our solar system, attracted by its fiery center, and moving in its several orbits with regular, majestic, and periodical revolutions, we are charmed at the

prospect and contemplation of those worlds of motion, and adore the wisdom and the power by which they are attracted, and their velocity regulated and perpetuated. And when we reflect that the blessings of life are derived from and dependent on the properties, qualities, constructions, proportions, and movements of that stupendous machine, we gratefully acknowledge the divine beneficence. When we extend our thoughts (through our external sensations) to the vast regions of the starry

heavens, we are lost in the immensity of God's works; some stars appear fair and luminous, and others scarcely discernible to the eye, which by the help of glasses make a brilliant appearance, bringing the knowledge of others far remote within the verge of our feeble discoveries, which merely by the eye could not have been discerned or distinguished. These discoveries of the works of God naturally prompt the inquisitive mind to conclude that the author of this astonishing part of creation, which is displayed to our view, has still extended his creation, so that if it were possible that any of us could be transported to the farthest extended star which is perceptible to us here, we should from thence survey worlds as distant from that, as that is from this, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Furthermore, it is altogether reasonable to conclude that the heavenly bodies, *alias* worlds, which move or are situate within the circle of our knowledge, as well as all others throughout immensity, are each and every of them possessed or inhabited by some intelligent agents or other, however different their sensations or manner of receiving or communicating their ideas may be from ours, or however different from each other. For why would it not have been as wise or as consistent with the perfections which we adore in God, to have neglected giving being to intelligences in this world as in those other worlds, interspersed with either of various qualities in his immense creation? And inasmuch as this world is thus replenished, we may with the highest rational certainty infer that as God has given us to rejoice and adore him for our being, he has acted consistent with his goodness, in the display of his providence throughout the universality of worlds.

To suppose that God Almighty has confined his goodness to this world, to the exclusion of all others, is much similar to the idle fancies of some individuals in this world, that they and those of their communion or faith are the favorites of heaven exclusively; but these are narrow and bigoted conceptions, which are degrading to a rational nature and utterly unworthy of God, of whom we should form the most exalted ideas. Furthermore, there could be no display of goodness or of

any of the moral perfections of God, merely in replying immensity with a stupid creation of elements or sluggish, senseless, and incognitive matter, which by nature may be supposed to be incapable of sensation, reflection, and enjoyment undoubtedly elements and material compositions were designed by God to subserve rational beings, by constituting or supporting them in their respective modes of existence, in this or those other numerous worlds.

There may be in God's boundless empire of nature and providence as many different sorts of modified sensation as there are different worlds and temperatures in immensity, or at least sensation may more or less vary; but whether their sensations agree in any or many respects or not, or whether they agree with ours, or if in any part, how far, are matters unknown to us, but that there are intelligent orders of beings interspersed through the creation of God, is a matter of the highest degree of rational certainty of any thing that falls short of mathematical demonstration or of proofs which come within the reach of our outward sensations, called sensible demonstration. For if this is the only world that is replenished with life and reason, it includes the whole circumference of God's providence, and there would be no display of wisdom or goodness merely in governing rude elements and senseless matter, nor could there be any valuable end proposed by such a supposed government, or any happiness, instruction, or subserviency to being in general, for any reason assigned by such a creation (for it cannot be a providence) should have had the divine approbation, and consequently we may be morally certain that rational beings are interspersed co-extensive with the creation of God.

Although the various orders of intelligences throughout infinitude differ ever so much in their manner of sensation, and consequently in their manner of communication or of receiving ideas, yet reason and consciousness must be the same in all, but not the same with respect to the various objects of the several worlds, though in nature the same. For instance, a person born blind cannot possibly have an idea of colors, though his sensibility of sound and feeling may be as acute as ours;

and since there are such a variety of modes of sensation in this world, how vastly numerous may we apprehend them to be in immensity! We shall soon, by pondering on these things, feel the insufficiency of our imagination to conceive of the immense possibility of the variety of their modes of sensation and the manner of intercourse of cogitative beings.

It may be objected that a man cannot subsist in the sun, but does it follow from thence 10 that God cannot or has not constituted a nature peculiar to that fiery region, and caused it to be as natural and necessary for it to suck in and breathe out flames of fire, as it is for us to do the like in air? Numerous are the kinds of fishy animals, which can no other way subsist but in the water, in which other animals would perish (amphibious ones excepted), while other animals, in a variety of forms, either swifter or slower, move on the surface 20 of the earth or wing the air of these there are sundry kinds which during the seasons of winter live without food, and many of the insects which are really possessed of animal life remain frozen, and as soon as they are let loose by the kind influence of the sun, they again assume their wonted animal life, and if animal life may differ so much in the same world, what inconceivable variety may be possible in worlds innumerable, as applicable 30 to mental, cogitative, and organized beings! Certain it is, that any supposed obstructions concerning the quality or temperature of any or every of those worlds could not have been any bar in the way of God Almighty, with regard to his replenishing his universal creation with moral agents. The unlimited perfection of God could perfectly well adapt every part of his creation to the design of whatever rank or species of constituted beings 40 his Godlike wisdom and goodness saw fit to impart existence to, so that as there is no deficiency of absolute perfection in God, it is rationally demonstrative that the immense creation is replenished with rational agents, and that it has been eternally so, and that the display of divine goodness must have been as perfect and complete in the antecedent, as it is possible to be in the subsequent eternity.

From this theological way of arguing on the creation and providence of God, it appears

that the whole, which we denominate by the term *nature*, which is the same as creation perfectly regulated, was eternally connected together by the creator to answer the same all-glorious purpose, *scilicet* the display of the divine nature, the consequences of which are existence and happiness to being in general, so that creation, with all its productions, operates according to the laws of nature and is sustained by the self-existent eternal cause in perfect order and decorum, agreeable to the eternal wisdom, unalterable rectitude, impartial justice, and immense goodness of the divine nature, which is a summary of God's providence. It is from the established order of nature that summer and winter, rainy and fair seasons, monsoons, refreshing breezes, seed time and harvest, day and night, interchangeably succeed each other and diffuse their extensive blessings to man. Every enjoyment and support of life is from God, delivered to his creatures in and by the tendency, aptitude, disposition, and operation of those laws — Nature is the medium or intermediate instrument through which God dispenses his benignity to mankind. The air we breathe in, the light of the sun, and the waters of the murmuring rills evince his providence, and well it is that they are given in so great profusion that they cannot by the monopoly of the rich be engrossed from the poor.

When we copiously pursue the study of nature, we are certain to be lost in the immensity of the works and wisdom of God; we may nevertheless, in a variety of things, discern their fitness, happyfying tendency, and sustaining quality to us-ward, from all which, as rational and contemplative beings, we are prompted to infer that God is universally uniform and consistent in his infinitude of creation and providence; although we cannot comprehend all that consistency, by reason of infirmity, yet we are morally sure that of all possible plans, infinite wisdom must have eternally adopted the best, and infinite goodness have approved it, and infinite power have perfected it. And as the good of being in general must have been the ultimate end of God in his creation and government of his creatures, his omniscience could not fail to have it always present in his view. Universal

nature must therefore be ultimately attracted to this single point, and infinite perfection must have eternally displayed itself in creation and providence. From hence we infer that God is as eternal and infinite in his goodness as his self-existent and perfect nature is omnipotently great.

#### CHAPTER XIV, SECTION III

### *Of the Importance of the Exercise of Reason and Practice of Morality, in Order to the Happiness of Mankind*

The period of life is very uncertain, and at the longest is but short; a few years bring us from infancy to manhood, a few more to a dissolution, pain, sickness, and death are the necessary consequences of animal life. Through life we struggle with physical evils, which eventually are certain to destroy our earthly composition; and well would it be for us did evils end here, but alas! moral evil has been more or less predominant in our agency; and though natural evil is unavoidable, yet moral evil may be prevented or remedied by the exercise of virtue. Morality is therefore of more importance to us than any or all other attainments, as it is a habit of mind which, from a retrospective consciousness of our agency in this life, we should carry with us into our succeeding state of existence, as an acquired appendage of our rational nature and as the necessary means of our mental happiness. Virtue and vice are the only things in this world which, with our souls, are capable of surviving death; the former is the rational and only procuring cause of all intellectual happiness, and the latter of conscious guilt and misery; and therefore our indispensable duty and ultimate interest is to love, cultivate, and improve the one, as the means of our greatest good, and to hate and abstain from the other, as productive of our greatest evil. And in order thereto, we should so far divest ourselves of the incumbrances of this world (which are too apt to engross our attention) as to acquire a consistent system of the knowledge of religious duty, and make it our constant endeavor in life to act conformably to it. The knowledge of the being, perfections, creation, and providence of God, and of the immortality

of our souls, is the foundation of religion, which has been particularly illustrated in the four first chapters of this discourse. And as the pagan, Jewish, Christian, and Mahometan countries of the world have been overwhelmed with a multiplicity of revelations diverse from each other, and which, by their respective promulgators, are said to have been immediately inspired into their souls by the spirit of God, or immediately communicated to them by the intervening agency of angels (as in the instance of the invisible Gabriel to Mahomet), and as those revelations have been received and credited by far the greater part of the inhabitants of the several countries of the world (on whom they have been obtruded) as supernaturally revealed by God or angels; and which, in doctrine and discipline, are in most respects repugnant to each other, it fully evinces their imposture and authorizes us, without a lengthy course of arguing, to determine with certainty that not more than one, if any one, of them had their original from God, as they clash with each other, which is ground of high probability against the authenticity of each of them.

A revelation that may be supposed to be really of the institution of God must also be supposed to be perfectly consistent or uniform, and to be able to stand the test of truth, therefore such pretended revelations as are tendered to us as the contrivance of heaven, which do not bear that test, we may be morally certain, was [*sic*] either originally a deception or has since, by adulteration, become spurious. Furthermore, should we admit that among the numerous revelations on which the respective priests have given the stamp of divinity, some one of them was in reality of divine authority, yet we could no otherwise, as rational beings, distinguish it from others, but by reason.

Reason therefore must be the standard by which we determine the respective claims of revelation, for otherwise we may as well subscribe to the divinity of the one as of the other, or to the whole of them, or to none at all. So likewise, on this thesis, if reason rejects the whole of those revelations, we ought to return to the religion of nature and reason.

Undoubtedly it is our duty, and for our best good, that we occupy and improve the

faculties with which our Creator has endowed us, but so far as prejudice or prepossession of opinion prevails over our minds, in the same proportion reason is excluded from our theory or practice. Therefore, if we would acquire useful knowledge, we must first divest ourselves of those impediments and sincerely endeavor to search out the truth and draw our conclusions from reason and just argument, which will never conform to our inclination, 10 interest, or fancy, but we must conform to that if we would judge rightly. As certain as we determine contrary to reason, we make a wrong conclusion, therefore, our wisdom is to conform to the nature and reason of things, as well in religious matters as in other sciences. Preposterously absurd would it be to negative the exercise of reason in religious concerns and yet be actuated by it in all other and less occurrences of life. All our knowledge of things 20 is derived from God, in and by the order of nature, out of which we cannot perceive, reflect, or understand anything whatsoever; our external senses are natural and so are our souls; by the instrumentality of the former we perceive the objects of sense, and with the latter we reflect on them. And those objects are also natural, so that ourselves, and all things about

us, and our knowledge collected therefrom is natural, and not supernatural, as argued in the Sixth Chapter.

We may, and often do, connect or arrange our ideas together in a wrong or improper manner for the want of skill or judgment, or through mistake or the want of application, or through the influence of prejudice, but in all such cases the error does not originate from the ideas themselves but from the composer; for a system, or an arrangement of ideas justly composed, always contain[s] the truth, but an unjust composition never fails to contain error and falsehood. Therefore an unjust connection of ideas is not derived from nature but from the imperfect composition of man. Misconnection of ideas is the same as misjudging, and has no positive existence, being merely a creature of the imagination; but nature and truth are real and uniform, and the rational mind, by reasoning, discerns the uniformity and is thereby enabled to make a just composition of ideas which will stand the test of truth. But the fantastical illuminations of the credulous and supersitious part of mankind proceed from weakness, and as far as they take place in the world, subvert the religion of Reason and Truth.

1784

1735 ~ *Samuel Andrew Peters* ~ 1826

SAMUEL PETERS, clergyman, loyalist, historian, and promoter, was born in Hebron, Connecticut, graduated at Yale in 1757, was ordained in London in 1759, and returned to his native town as rector from 1760 to 1774. For giving information regarding the activities of the Sons of Liberty and preaching against resistance to England, he was twice forced to sign recantations, and in the autumn of 1774 fled to England, where he received a small pension until 1804. He preached occasionally, wrote on theological topics, and in 1781 published *A General History of Connecticut*, a work which, from its aspersions upon the motives of Puritan and Revolutionary leaders and its exaggeration of the original "blue laws" in the Colony, became called in New England the "lying history." After the Revolution and the reorganization of the Episcopal Church in the United States, Peters tried to obtain an American bishopric and was actually appointed Bishop of Vermont in 1795, but

through a technicality he was not consecrated. In 1805 he returned to America as agent for the claims of the family of Jonathan Carver, the explorer, to a large tract of land in Wisconsin. He later bought the title for himself and organized a company for the developing of his territory, but Congress in 1826 annulled his claim. He died in New York at the age of ninety.

Though *A General History of Connecticut* is certainly not very reliable as history, it presents the loyalist view of faction and defiance of the authority of the crown. His chapter on the "blue laws" has strongly colored our prevailing ideas of the rigorousness of early New England legislation. And in his grave recording, mixed with sober facts, of current yarns about extraordinary natural phenomena of the Connecticut valley, he is important as a forerunner of David Crockett and the "tall tales" of the western frontier.

Sketches of Peters may be found in Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, V (1859) and in F. B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Yale College*, II (1896). See also J. H. Trumbull, *The True-Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven and the False Blue-Laws Invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters* (1876), and *The Reverend Samuel Peters, His Defenders and Apologists* (1877), and S. J. McCormick, "Dr. Samuel Peters," in *The Churchman*, May 26 and June 2, 1877. The *General History of Connecticut* was republished, with additions, notes, etc., by S. J. McCormick in 1877. Peters's only other long work was a *History of the Rev. Hugh Peters* (1807).

## From A GENERAL HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT

### [*The Narrows of the Connecticut*]

Two hundred miles from the Sound is a narrow of five yards only, formed by two shelving mountains of solid rock, whose tops intercept the clouds. Through this chasm are compelled to pass all the waters which in the time of the floods bury the northern country. At the upper cohos<sup>1</sup> the river then spreads several miles wide, and for five or six weeks ships of war might sail over lands that afterwards produce the greatest crops of hay and grain in all America. People who can bear the sight, the groans, the tremblings, and surly motion of water, trees, and ice through this awful passage, view with astonishment one of the greatest phenomenons in nature. Here water is consolidated, without frost, by pressure, by swiftness, between the punching, sturdy rocks, to such a degree of induration,<sup>2</sup> that an iron crow<sup>3</sup> floats smoothly down its

current—here iron, lead, and cork have one common weight—here, steady as time, and harder than marble, the stream passes irresistible, if not swift, as lightning—the electric fire rends trees in pieces with no greater ease than does this mighty water. The passage is about 400 yards in length, and of a zigzag form, with obtuse corners. The following representation will assist the reader in forming an idea of it.

At high water are carried through this strait, masts and other timber with incredible swiftness, and sometimes with safety, but when the water is too low, the masts, timber, and trees strike on one side or the other, and though of the largest size, are rent in one moment into shivers and splintered like a broom, to the amazement of spectators. The meadows for many miles below are covered with immense quantities of wood thus torn in pieces, which compel the hardest travellers to reflect how feeble is man, and how great that Almighty who formed the lightnings, thunders, and the irresistible power and strength of waters!

No living creature was ever known to pass

<sup>1</sup> great bendings, called cohosos [Peters's definition]  
<sup>2</sup> hardness    <sup>3</sup> crowbar

through this narrow except an Indian woman, who was in a canoe, attempting to cross the river above it, but carelessly suffered herself to fall within the power of the current. Perceiving her danger, she took a bottle of rum she had with her and drank the whole of it, then lay down in her canoe to meet her destiny. She marvelously went through safely, and was taken out of the canoe some miles below, quite intoxicated, by some Englishmen. Being asked how she could be so daringly imprudent as to drink such a quantity of rum with the prospect of instant death before her, the squaw, as well as her condition would let her, replied, "Yes, it was too much rum for once, to be sure; but I was not willing to lose a drop of it; so I drank it, and you see I have saved all "

[*The Humility, the Whippoorwill,  
and the Tree-frog*]

The partridges in New England are near as large as a Dorking fowl, the quails, as an English partridge, and the robins twice as big as those in England. The dew-munk, so named from its articulating those syllables, is black and white, and of the size of an English robin. Its flesh is delicious. The humility is so called because it speaks the word *humility*, and seldom mounts high in the air. Its legs are long enough to enable it to outrun a dog for a little way, its wings long and narrow, body meager, and of the size of a blackbird's, plumage variegated with white, black, blue, and red. It lives on tadpoles, spawn, and worms, has an eye more piercing than the falcon, and the swiftness of an eagle. Hence it can never be shot for it sees the sparks of fire even before they enkindle the powder, and by the extreme rapidity of its flight, gets out of reach in an instant. It is never known to light upon a tree, but is always seen upon the ground or wing. These birds appear in New England in summer only, what becomes of them afterwards is not discovered. They are caught in snares, but can never be tamed.

The whippoorwill has so named itself by its nocturnal songs. It is also called the pope, by reason of its darting with great swiftness from the clouds to the ground, and bawling out

*Pope!* which alarms young people and the fanatics very much, especially as they know it to be an ominous bird. However, it has hitherto proved friendly, always giving travelers and others notice of an approaching storm, by saluting them every minute with *Pope! Pope!* It flies only a little before sunset, unless for this purpose of giving notice of a storm. It never deceives the people with false news. If the tempest is to continue long, the augurs appear in flocks, and nothing can be heard but the word *Pope! Pope!* The whippoorwill is about the size of a cuckoo, has a short beak, long and narrow wings, a large head and mouth enormous, yet it is not a bird of prey. Under its throat is a pocket, which it fills with air at pleasure, whereby it sounds forth the fatal words *Pope* in the day, and *Whip-her-I-will* in the night. The superstitious

inhabitants would have exorcised this harmless bird long ago, as an emissary from Rome and an enemy to the American vine, had they not found out that it frequents New England only in the summer, and prefers the wilderness to a palace. Nevertheless, many cannot but believe it a spy from some foreign court, an agent of Antichrist, a lover of persecution, and an enemy of Protestants, because it sings of *whipping*, and of the *Pope*, which they think portends misery and a change of religion.

The tree-frog cannot be called an insect, a reptile, or one of the winged host. He has four legs, the two foremost short, with claws as sharp as those of a squirrel. the hind legs five inches long, and folding by three joints. His body is about as big as the first joint of a man's thumb. Under his throat is a wind-bag, which assists him in singing the word *I-sa-ac*, all the night. When it rains and is very dark, he sings the loudest. His voice is not so pleasing as that of a nighthawk, but this would be a venial imperfection if he would but keep silence on Saturday nights, and not forever prefer *I-sa-ac* to *Abraham* and *Jacob*. He has more elasticity in his long legs than any other creature yet known. By this means he will leap five yards up a tree, fastening himself to it by his fore feet, and in a moment will hop or spring as far as from one tree to another. It is from the singing of the tree-frog that the Americans have acquired the name of *Little*



*Isaac.* Indeed, like a certain part of them, the creature appears very devout, noisy, arbitrary, and phlegmatic, and associates with none but what agree with him in his ways.

[*Some Connecticut Towns: The Frogs of Windham*]

Time not having destroyed the walls of the fort at Saybrook, Mr. Whitefield, in 1740, attempted to bring them down, as Joshua brought down those of Jericho, to convince the gaping multitude of his divine mission. He walked seven times round the fort with prayer and ramshorns blowing—he called on the angel of Joshua to come and do as he had done at the walls of Jericho, but the angel was deaf, or on a journey, or asleep, and therefore the walls remained. Hereupon George cried aloud, "This town is accused for not receiving the messenger of the Lord; therefore the angel is departed, and the walls shall stand as a monument of a sinful people." He *shook off the dust of his feet* against them, and departed, and went to Lyme

*Killingworth* is ten miles west from Saybrook, lies on the sea, and resembles Wandsworth. The township is eight miles square, and divided into two parishes. This town is noted for the residence of the Rev Mr. Elliot, commonly called Dr. Elliot, who discovered the art of making steel out of sand, and wrote a book on husbandry, which will secure him a place in the Temple of Fame.

*Windham*, the second county in the ancient kingdom of Sassacus, or colony of Saybrook, is hilly; but the soil being rich, has excellent butter, cheese, hemp, wheat, Indian corn, and horses. Its towns are twelve.

Windham resembles Rumford, and stands on Winnomantic [Wilhmantic] river. Its meeting-house is elegant, and has a steeple, bell, and clock. Its court-house is scarcely to be looked upon as an ornament. The township forms four parishes, and is ten miles square.

Strangers are very much terrified at the hideous noise made on summer evenings by the vast number of frogs in the brooks and ponds. There are about thirty different voices among them, some of which resemble the

bellowing of a bull. The owls and whippoorwills complete the rough concert, which may be heard several miles. Persons accustomed to such serenades are not disturbed by them at their proper stations; but one night, in July, 1758, the frogs of an artificial pond, three miles square, and about five from Windham, finding the water dried up, left the place in a body, and marched, or rather hopped, towards Winnomantic river. They were under the necessity of taking the road and going through the town, which they entered about midnight. The bull frogs were the leaders, and the pipers followed without number. They filled a road 40 yards wide for four miles in length, and were for several hours, in passing through the town, unusually clamorous. The inhabitants were equally perplexed and frightened, some expected to find an army of French and Indians, others feared an earthquake, and dissolution of nature. The consternation was universal. Old and young, male and female, fled naked from their beds with worse shriekings than those of the frogs. The event was fatal to several women. The men, after a flight of half a mile, in which they met with many broken shins, finding no enemies in pursuit of them, made a halt and summoned resolution enough to venture back to their wives and children, when they distinctly heard from the enemy's camp these words, "*Wight, Hilderken, Dier, Tote*" This last they thought meant *treaty*, and plucking up courage, they sent a triumvirate to capitulate with the supposed French and Indians. These three men approached in their shirts, and begged to speak with the General, but it being dark, and no answer given, they were sorely agitated for some time betwixt hope and fear, at length, however, they discovered that the dreaded inimical army was an army of thirsty frogs, going to the river for a little water.

Such an incursion was never known before nor since; and yet the people of Windham have been ridiculed for their umidity on this occasion. I verily believe an army under the Duke of Marlborough would, under like circumstances, have acted no better than they did.

In 1768, the inhabitants on Connecticut river were as much alarmed at an army of

caterpillars, as those of Windham were at the frogs; and no one found reason to jest at their fears. Those worms came in one night, and covered the earth on both sides of that river to an extent of three miles in front and two in depth. They marched with great speed and eat up everything green for the space of one hundred miles, in spite of rivers, ditches, fires, and the united efforts of 1,000 men. They were, in general, two inches long, had white bodies covered with thorns, and red throats. When they had finished their work, they went down to the river Connecticut, where they died, poisoning the waters until they were washed into the sea. This calamity was imputed by some to the vast number of trees and logs lying in the creeks, and to the cinders, smoke, and fires made to consume the waste wood for three or four hundred miles up the Connecticut; while others thought it augured future evils similar to those in Egypt. The inhabitants of the Verdmonts<sup>1</sup> would unavoidably have perished by famine in consequence of the devastation of these worms, had not a remarkable providence filled the wilderness with wild pigeons, which were killed by sticks as they sat on the branches of trees in such multitudes, that 30,000 people lived on them for three weeks. If a natural cause may be assigned for the coming of the frogs and caterpillars, yet the visit of the pigeons to a wilderness in August has been necessarily ascribed to an interposition of infinite power and goodness. Happy will it be for America, if the smiling providence of Heaven produces gratitude, repentance, and obedience amongst her children!

*Hebron* is the center of the province; and it is remarkable that there are thirty-six towns larger, and thirty-six less. It is situated between two ponds, about two miles in length

<sup>1</sup> Vermont

and one in breadth, and is intersected by two small rivers, one of which falls into the Connecticut, the other into the Thames. A large meeting[house] stands on a square, where four roads meet. The town resembles Finchley. The township eight miles square; five parishes, one is Episcopal. The number of houses is 400; of the inhabitants, 3,200. It pays one part out of seventy-three of all governmental taxes, and is a bed of farmers on their own estates. Frequent suits about the Indian titles have rendered them famous for their knowledge in law and self-preservation. In 1740, Mr. George Whitefield gave them this laconic character: "Hebron," says he, "is the stronghold of Satan; for its people mightily oppose the work of the Lord, being more fond of earth than of heaven."

This town is honored by the residence of the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Pomeroy, an excellent scholar, an exemplary gentleman, and a most thundering preacher of the New Light<sup>2</sup> order. His great abilities procured him the favor and honor of being the instructor of Abimeleck, the present King of Mohegn. He is of a very persevering, sovereign disposition; but just, polite, generous, charitable, and without dissimulation — *Avis alba*.<sup>2</sup>

Here also reside some of the descendants of William Peters, Esq., already spoken of, among whom is the Rev. Samuel Peters,<sup>3</sup> an Episcopal clergyman, who, by his generosity and zeal for the Church of England and loyalty to the House of Hanover, has rendered himself famous both in New and Old England, and in some degree made an atonement for the fanaticism and treasons of his uncle Hugh, and of his ancestor on his mother's side, Major-general Thomas Harrison, both hanged at Charing-Cross in the last century. . . .

1781

<sup>2</sup> a sect of the Congregationalists  
i.e., a great rarity

<sup>3</sup> a white bird

<sup>4</sup> the author

1743 ~ *Thomas Jefferson* ~ 1826

THE VERSATILITY so marked in many of the statesmen of the Revolution was amazingly conspicuous in Jefferson. He served his country in the House of Burgesses, the Continental Congress, and the Congress of the United States, and as Minister to France, Secretary of State, and President of the United States. Meanwhile he was concerned with the classics, with music, architecture, poetry, and science, besides developing a political theory which has largely dominated both the Democratic party and, in a measure, its successive rivals in this country. As a philosopher and lawyer, his writings stress both the abstract and the legal rights of man. The most important document associated with him is the Declaration of Independence, which he drafted.

Leagued by birth and marriage with the best Virginia families, the owner of 10,000 acres of land and over a hundred slaves, and an aristocrat in his tastes and culture, he was politically the advocate and spokesman of the independent small farmer class of the western counties of his state. Perhaps better acquainted than any other American with Greek, Roman, French, and other Continental political philosophies, he yet was actuated by the ideas of English theorists from Locke on, carried to their extreme application. He admitted that he professed "the same principles" that Tom Paine professed in *The Rights of Man*. As early as 1774, in his *Summary View of the Rights of British America*, on the basis of the rights of migration and conquest by the European settlers in America, as by the Anglo-Saxons in England, "he denied all parliamentary authority over the colonies and claimed that the only political tie with Great Britain was supplied by the King, to whom the colonists had voluntarily submitted." The Declaration of Independence therefore combines with an assertion of natural rights a long list of alleged injuries perpetrated by George III which justified the severing of this one tie of authority.

When, from his secretaryship in Washington's cabinet, he saw the new government, under Hamilton's influence, becoming more and more centralized in power and aristocratic in spirit—"galloping fast into monarchy"—he became alarmed and labored to organize the disunited agrarian and landless elements into an opposition party. By adroit leadership and the aid of devoted followers he succeeded, and within eight years was enabled to accomplish a peaceful revolution of power and re-direct the course of government toward popular sovereignty.

Jefferson envisaged an agricultural democracy composed mainly of and controlled by farmers and free laborers, and dreaded the growth of great industrial organizations in which the individual laborer has no voice or interest. Realizing the importance of education in such a scheme, he labored long and earnestly for the

establishment of state-supported universities as opposed to church and private colleges. He planned for many years for the erection of the University of Virginia and regarded its establishment in 1819 as one of his greatest achievements.

The best edition of *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* is by P. L. Ford (10 vols., with list of Jefferson's works in Vol. I, 1892-1899). Other useful editions are by A. L. Bergh (20 vols., with bibliography in Vol. XX, 1903); and by T. J. Randolph (4 vols., 1892). *Thomas Jefferson's Correspondence* was edited by W. C. Ford (1916). G. Chinard edited *The Commonplace Book of Thomas Jefferson* (1926) and *The Literary Bible of Thomas Jefferson* (1928). The introduction in the latter discusses Jefferson's literary theories and tastes. F. C. Prescott's *Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson: Selections*, a very useful introduction, appeared in 1934.

Important biographies are those by G. Chinard (1929), W. E. Dodd (1911), A. J. Nock (1926), H. S. Randall (3 vols., 1858), and C. G. Bowers, *Jefferson in Power* (1936). The article in *DAB* is by Dumas Malone, that in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, by Francis S. Philbrick.

The background of Jefferson's work and special topics concerning it are discussed in the following. Henry Adams, *History of the United States . . . during the First and Second Administrations of Thomas Jefferson* (4 vols., 1889-1890), H. B. Adams, *Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia* (1888), J. T. Adams, *The Living Jefferson* (1936); C. F. Arrowood, *Thomas Jefferson and Education in a Republic* (1930); C. A. Beard, *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy* (1915); C. G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Hamilton* (1925); E. Channing, *The Jeffersonian System, 1801-1811* (1906); G. P. Fisher, "Jefferson and the Social Compact Theory," *Yale Review*, II, 403-417 (1894), W. D. Gould, "The Religious Opinions of Thomas Jefferson," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XX, 191-209 (1933), J. H. Hazelton, *The Declaration of Independence* (1906), R. J. Honeywell, *The Educational Work of Thomas Jefferson and His Colleagues* (1931); S. F. Kimball, *Thomas Jefferson, Architect* (1916), I. W. Raley, *American Philosophy, the Early Schools* (1907), and P. Wistach, *Jefferson and Monticello* (1926).

## THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION

### OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.—We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.—That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.—

That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes, and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies;

and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.—He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.—He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.—He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.—He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fanguing them into compliance with his measures.—He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.—He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.—He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.—He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.—He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.—He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.—He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies

without the consent of our legislatures.—He has affected to render the military independent of and superior to the civil power.—He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:—For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us.—For protecting them, by a mock-trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States.—For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world.—For imposing taxes on us without our consent.—For depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury.—For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences.—For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies.—For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments.—For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.—He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us:—He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.—He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.—He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.—He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions. In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most

humble terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connection and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends —

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, and that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do.—And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

1776

## [A GIRL'S EDUCATION]

LETTER TO MARTHA JEFFERSON

Annapolis, Nov. 28th, 1783

DEAR PATSY: After four days' journey, I arrived here without any accident, and in as

good health as when I left Philadelphia. The conviction that you would be more improved in the situation I have placed you than if still with me has solaced me on my parting with you, which my love for you has rendered a difficult thing. The acquirements which I hope you will make under the tutors I have provided for you will render you more worthy of my love; and if they cannot increase it, they will prevent its diminution. Consider the good lady who has taken you under her roof, who has undertaken to see that you perform all your exercises, and to admonish you in all those wanderings from what is right or what is clever, to which your inexperience would expose you: consider her, I say, as your mother, as the only person to whom, since the loss with which Heaven has pleased to afflict you,<sup>1</sup> you can now look up, and that her displeasure or disapprobation, on any occasion, will be an immense misfortune, which should you be so unhappy as to incur by any unguarded act, think no concession too much to regain her good-will. With respect to the distribution of your time, the following is what I should approve.

From 8 to 10, practise music.

From 10 to 1, dance one day and draw another.

From 1 to 2, draw on the day you dance, and write a letter next day.

From 3 to 4, read French

From 4 to 5, exercise yourself in music.

From 5 till bedtime, read English, write, etc.

Communicate this plan to Mrs. Hopkinson, and if she approves of it, pursue it. As long as Mrs. Trist remains in Philadelphia, cultivate her affection. She has been a valuable friend to you, and her good sense and good heart make her valued by all who know her, and by nobody on earth more than me. I expect you will write me by every post. Inform me what books you read, what tunes you learn, and enclose me your best copy of every lesson in drawing. Write also one letter a week either to your Aunt Eppes, your Aunt Skipwith, your Aunt Carr, or the little lady from whom I now enclose a letter, and always put the

<sup>1</sup> Jefferson's wife, Martha Wayles Jefferson, had died in 1782.

letter you so write under cover to me. Take care that you never spell a word wrong. Always before you write a word, consider how it is spelled, and, if you do not remember it, turn to a dictionary. It produces great praise to a lady to spell well. I have placed my happiness on seeing you good and accomplished; and no distress this world can now bring on me would equal that of your disappointing my hopes. If you love me, then strive to be good under every situation and to all living creatures, and to acquire those accomplishments which I have put in your power, and which will go far toward insuring you the warmest love of your affectionate father.

P.S.—Keep my letters and read them at times, that you may always have present in your mind those things which will endear you to me.

#### From NOTES ON THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

##### [On Slavery]

*Notes on the State of Virginia*, first published privately in 1784, was Jefferson's extended reply to a series of questions regarding his native state, its resources, inhabitants, etc., asked by the Marquis de Barbé-Marbois, Secretary of the French Legation at Philadelphia in 1781. The reply was written to inform the French people regarding their new allies.

THERE must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it, for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. From his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could find no motive either in his philanthropy or his self-love for restraining the intemperance of passion toward his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments

of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to the worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. And with what execration should the statesman be loaded who, permitting one-half the citizens thus to trample on the rights of the other, transforms those into despots, and these into enemies, destroys the morals of the one part, and the *amor patriæ* of the other. For if a slave can have a country in this world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is born to live and labor for another; in which he must lock up the faculties of his nature, contribute as far as depends on his individual endeavors to the evanishment of the human race, or entail his own miserable condition on the endless generations proceeding from him. With the morals of the people, their industry also is destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labor for himself who can make another labor for him. This is so true that, of the proprietors of slaves, a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labor. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events; that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest. But it is impossible to be temperate and to pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will force their way into everyone's mind. I think a change already perceptible, since the origin of the present revolution. The spirit of the master is abating, that of the slave rising from the dust, his condition mollifying, the way, I hope, preparing, under the auspices of heaven,

for a total emancipation, and that this is disposed, in the order of events, to be with the consent of the masters, rather than by their extirpation.

1784

[ON THE ADOPTION OF THE  
CONSTITUTION]

LETTER TO MR. ALEXANDER DONALD

During the debates on the Constitution, Jefferson was in France. The plan proposed in the following letter for insuring public rights is typical of his methods as a political leader. His fears, summarized here, are more fully outlined in his autobiography for this period.

February, 1788

DEAR SIR,

I wish with all my soul that the nine first conventions<sup>1</sup> may accept the new Constitution, because this will secure to us the good it contains, which I think great and important. But I equally wish that the four latest conventions, whichever they be, may refuse to accede to it till a declaration of rights be annexed. This would probably command the offer of such a declaration and thus give to the world fabric perhaps as much perfection as any one of that kind ever had. By a declaration of rights I mean one which shall stipulate freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of commerce against monopolies, trial by juries in all cases, no suspensions of the habeas corpus, no standing armies. These are fetters against doing evil which no honest government should decline. There is another strong feature in the new Constitution which I as strongly dislike. That is, the perpetual reeligibility of the President.<sup>2</sup> Of this I expect no amendment at present, because I do not see that anybody has objected to it on your side the water. But it will be productive of cruel distress to our country, even in your day and mine. The importance to France and England, to have our government in the hands of a friend or a foe will occasion their interference

by money, and even by arms. Our President will be of much more consequence to them than a King of Poland. We must take care, however, that neither this, nor any other objection to the new form, produces a schism in our Union. That would be an incurable evil because near friends, falling out, never reunite cordially; whereas all of us going together, we shall be sure to cure the evils of our new Constitution, before they do great harm.

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS:—

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge and the weakness of my powers so justly inspire. A rising nation spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking.

Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that in the other high authorities provided by our constitution I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal on which to rely under all difficulties. To you, then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled

<sup>1</sup> the conventions held in the several states    <sup>2</sup> By an earlier vote, Jefferson says, the Convention had recommended, eight to two, a term of seven years, and, by a simple majority, only a single term of office for the President.

During the contest of opinion through



which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely and to speak and to write what they think. But this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the constitution, all will, of course, arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind; let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore, that this should be more felt and feared by some and less by others; and should divide opinions as to measures of safety. But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that

this government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe thus, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law would fly to the standard of the law; would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

Let us then, with courage and confidence, pursue our federal and republican principles; our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe, too high-minded to endure the degradation of the others, possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the hundredth and thousandth generation, entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practised in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which, by all its dispensations, proves that it delights in the happiness of man here, and his greater happiness hereafter, with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens, a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government, and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicity.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principle of this government, and consequently

those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them in the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the state governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution, where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which [there] is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority—economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened, the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid, the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair then, fellow-citizens, to the post which you have assigned me. With experi-

ence enough in subordinate stations to know the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretensions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose preëminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and had destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

Relying then on the patronage of your good-will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

1801

## [ON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION]

LETTER TO DAVID WILLIAMS

Jefferson's reliance upon an America chiefly devoted to agriculture and his distrust of commerce and particularly of large manufacturing industries was one of his chief tenets. In this letter he is one of the earliest advocates of advanced training for agriculturists.

Washington, November 14, 1803

Dear Sir:

The greatest evils of populous society have ever appeared to me to spring from the vicious distribution of its members among the occupations called for. I have no doubt that those nations are essentially right which leave this to individual choice, as a better guide to an advantageous distribution than any other which could be devised. But when, by a blind course, particular occupations are ruinously overcharged, and others left in want of hands, the national authorities can do much toward restoring the equilibrium. On the revival of letters, learning became the universal favorite. And with reason, because there was not enough of it existing to manage the affairs of a nation to the best advantage, nor to advance its individuals to the happiness of which they were susceptible, by improvements in their minds, their morals, their health, and in those conveniences which contribute to the comfort and embellishment of life. All the efforts of the society, therefore, were directed to the increase of learning, and the inducements of respect, ease, and profit were held up for its encouragement. Even the charities of the nation forgot that misery was their object, and spent themselves in founding schools to transfer to science the hardy sons of the plough. To these incitements were added the powerful fascinations of great cities. These circumstances have long since produced an overcharge in the class of competitors for learned occupation and great distress among the supernumerary candidates, and the more, as their habits of life have disqualified them for re-entering into the laborious class. The evil cannot be suddenly, nor perhaps ever, entirely cured; nor should I presume to say by what means it may be cured. Doubtless there are many engines which the nation might bring to bear on this object. Public opinion and public encouragement are among these. The class principally defective is that of agriculture. It is the first in utility, and ought to be the first in respect. The same artificial means which have been used to produce a competition in learning may be equally successful in restoring agriculture to its primary dignity in the eyes of men. It is a science of the very first order. It

counts among its handmaids the most respectable sciences, such as Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Mechanics, Mathematics generally, Natural History, Botany. In every college and university, a professorship of agriculture, and the class of its students, might be honored as the first. Young men closing their academical education with this, as the crown of all other sciences, fascinated with its solid charms, and at a time when they are to choose an occupation, instead of crowding the other classes, would return to the farms of their fathers, their own, or those of others, and replenish and invigorate a calling now languishing under contempt and oppression. The charitable schools, instead of storming their pupils with a lore which the present state of society does not call for, converted into schools of agriculture, might restore them to that branch qualified to enrich and honor themselves, and to increase the productions of the nation instead of consuming them. A gradual abolition of the useless offices so much accumulated in all governments might close this drain also from the labors of the field and lessen the burdens imposed on them. By these and the better means which will occur to others the surcharge of the learned might in time be drawn off to recruit the laboring class of citizens, the sum of industry be increased, and that of misery diminished.

Among the ancients, the redundancy of population was sometimes checked by exposing infants. To the moderns, America has offered a more humane resource. Many who cannot find employment in Europe accordingly come here. Those who can labor do well, for the most part. Of the learned class of emigrants, a small portion find employments analogous to their talents. But many fail and return to complete their course of misery in the scenes where it began. Even here we find too strong a current from the country to the towns, and instances beginning to appear of that species of misery which you are so humanely endeavoring to relieve with you. Although we have in the old countries of Europe the lesson of their experience to warn us, yet I am not satisfied we shall have the firmness and wisdom to profit by it. The general desire of men to live by their heads rather than their hands, and the

strong allurements of great cities to those who have any turn for dissipation, threaten to make them here, as in Europe, the sinks of voluntary misery. I perceive, however, that I have suffered my pen to run into a disquisition, when I had taken it up only to thank you for the volume you had been so kind as to send me, and to express my approbation of it. After apologizing, therefore, for having touched on a subject so much more familiar to you, and better understood, I beg leave to assure you of my high consideration and respect.

## [A LETTER OF RECONCILIATION]

## LETTER TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

This letter and that to John Adams, following, deal with the reconciliation of Adams and Jefferson after the defeat of the former in 1800 and explain Jefferson's attitude regarding their difference. Mrs. Adams had written a note of condolence on the death of Mary (Jefferson) Eppes but had carefully signed herself as one "who *once* took pleasure in subscribing herself your friend, Abigail Adams"

Washington, June 13, 1804

DEAR MADAM: The affectionate sentiments which you have had the goodness to express in your letter of May the 30th toward my dear departed daughter have awakened in me sensibilities natural to the occasion, and recalled your kindnesses to her, which I shall ever remember with gratitude and friendship. I can assure you with truth, they had made an indelible impression on her mind, and that to the last, on our meetings after long separations, whether I had heard lately of you and how you did were among the earliest of her inquiries. In giving you this assurance I perform a sacred duty for her, and at the same time am thankful for the occasion furnished me of expressing my regret that circumstances should have arisen which have seemed to draw a line of separation between us. The friendship with which you honored me has ever been valued and fully reciprocated; and although events have been passing which might be trying to some minds, I never believed yours to be of that kind, nor felt that my own was. Neither my estimate of your character, nor the esteem founded in that, has

ever been lessened for a single moment, although doubts whether it would be acceptable may have forbidden manifestations of it.

Mr. Adams's friendship and mine began at an earlier date. It accompanied us through long and important scenes. The different conclusions we had drawn from our political reading and reflections were not permitted to lessen personal esteem, each party being conscious they were the result of an honest conviction in the other. Like differences of opinion existing among our fellow-citizens attached them to one or the other of us and produced a rivalry in their minds which did not exist in ours. We never stood in one another's way; for if either had been withdrawn at any time, his favorers would not have gone over to the other, but would have sought for someone of homogeneous opinions. This consideration was sufficient to keep down all jealousy between us, and to guard our friendship from any disturbance by sentiments of rivalry, and I can say with truth that one act of Mr. Adams's life, and one only, ever gave me a moment's personal displeasure. I did consider his last appointments to office as personally unkind.<sup>1</sup> They were from among my most ardent political enemies, from whom no faithful co-operation could ever be expected, and laid me under the embarrassment of acting through men whose views were to defeat mine, or to encounter the odium of putting others in their places. It seems but common justice to leave a successor free to act by instruments of his own choice. If my respect for him did not permit me to ascribe the whole blame to the influence of others, it left something for friendship to forgive, and after brooding over it for some little time, and not always resisting the expression of it, I forgave it cordially and returned to the same state of

<sup>1</sup> "The last day of his political power, the last hours, and even beyond the midnight, were employed in filling all offices, and especially permanent ones, with the bitterest federalists, and providing for me the alternative, either to execute the government by my enemies, whose study it would be to thwart and defeat all my measures, or to incur the odium of such numerous removals from office as might bear me down" [From letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush (Jan. 26, 1812), who was instrumental in renewing the friendship of Adams and Jefferson.]

esteem and respect for him which has so long subsisted. Having come into life a little later than Mr. Adams, his career has preceded mine, as mine is followed by some other; and it will probably be closed at the same distance after him which time originally placed between us.<sup>1</sup> I maintain for him, and shall carry into private life, an uniform and high measure of respect and good-will, and for yourself a sincere attachment.

I have thus, my dear Madam, opened myself to you without reserve, which I have long wished an opportunity of doing; and without knowing how it will be received, I feel relief from being unboresomed. And I have now only to entreat your forgiveness for this transition from a subject of domestic affliction, to one which seems of a different aspect. But though connected with political events, it has been viewed by me most strongly in its unfortunate bearings on my private friendships. The injury these have sustained has been a heavy price for what has never given me equal pleasure. That you may both be favored with health, tranquillity, and long life is the prayer of one who tenders you the assurance of his highest consideration and esteem.

### [THOUGHTS IN OLD AGE]

LETTER TO JOHN ADAMS

Monticello, January 21, 1812.

A LETTER from you calls up recollections very dear to my mind. It carries me back to the times when, beset with difficulties and dangers, we were fellow-laborers in the same cause, struggling for what is most valuable to man, his right of self-government. Laboring always at the same oar, with some wave ever ahead, threatening to overwhelm us, and yet passing harmless under our bark, we knew not how we rode through the storm with heart and hand, and made a happy port. Still, we did not expect to be without rubs and difficulties; and we have had them. First, the detention of the western posts, then the coalition of Pillnitz, outlawing our commerce with France, and the British enforcement of the outlawry.

<sup>1</sup> The two old friends and political rivals died on the same day, July 4, 1826.

In your day, French depredations; in mine, English, and the Berlin and Milan decrees; now, the English orders of council, and the piracies they authorize. When these shall be over, it will be the impressment of our seamen or something else; and so we have gone on, and so we shall go on, puzzled and prospering beyond example in the history of man. And I do believe we shall continue to grow, to multiply and prosper until we exhibit an association powerful, wise, and happy beyond what has yet been seen by men. As for France and England, with all their pre-eminence in science, the one is a den of robbers, and the other of pirates. And if science produces no better fruits than tyranny, murder, rapine, and destruction of national morality, I would rather wish our country to be ignorant, honest, and estimable, as our neighboring savages are. But whither is senile garrulity leading me? Into politics, of which I have taken final leave. I think little of them and say less. I have given up newspapers in exchange for Tacitus and Thucydides, for Newton and Euclid, and I find myself much happier. Sometimes, indeed, I look back to former occurrences, in remembrance of our old friends and fellow-laborers, who have fallen before us. Of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, I see now living not more than half a dozen on your side of the Potomac, and on this side, myself alone. You and I have been wonderfully spared, and myself with remarkable health, and a considerable activity of body and mind I am on horseback three or four hours of every day; visit three or four times a year a possession I have ninety miles distant, performing the winter journey on horseback. I walk little, however, a single mile being too much for me, and I live in the midst of my grandchildren, one of whom has lately promoted me to be a great-grandfather. I have heard with pleasure that you also retain good health and a greater power of exercise in walking than I do. But I would rather have heard this from yourself, and that, writing a letter like mine, full of egotisms, and details of your health, your habits, occupations, and enjoyments, I should have the pleasure of knowing that in the race of life you do not keep, in its physical decline, the same distance

ahead of me which you have in political honors and achievements. No circumstances have lessened the interest I feel in these particulars respecting yourself; none have suspended for one moment my sincere esteem for you, and I now salute you with unchanged affection and respect.

### [THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON]

LETTER TO DR. WALTER JONES

Monticello, Jan. 2, 1814

I THINK I knew General Washington intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these.—

His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where, hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no general ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in a readjustment. The consequence was, that he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and York.<sup>1</sup> He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known; no motives of interest, of consanguinity, of friendship, or hatred being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally irritable

<sup>1</sup> Yorktown, in Virginia

and high-toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses he was honorable but exact; liberal in contributions to whatever promised utility, but frowning and unyielding on all visionary projects and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine; his stature exactly what one would wish; his deportment easy, erect, and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation, his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas nor fluency of words. In public, when called on for a sudden opinion, he was unready, short, and embarrassed. Yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. Thus he had acquired by conversation with the world, for his education was merely reading, writing, and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying, at a later day. His time was employed in action chiefly, reading little, and that only in agriculture and English history. His correspondence became necessarily extensive, and with journalizing his agricultural proceedings, occupied most of his leisure hours within doors. On the whole, his character was in its mass perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit, of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government new in its form and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example.

How, then, can it be perilous for you to take such a man on your shoulders? I am satisfied the great body of republicans think of him as I do. We were, indeed, dissatisfied with him on his ratification of the British treaty. But this was short-lived. We knew his honesty, the wiles with which he was encompassed, and that age had already begun to relax the firmness of his purposes; and I am convinced he is more deeply seated in the love and gratitude of the republicans, than in the Pharisaical homage of the federal monarchists. For he was no monarchist from preference of his judgment. The soundness of that gave him correct views of the rights of man, and his severe justice devoted him to them. He has often declared to me that he considered our new Constitution as an experiment on the practicability of republican government, and with what dose of liberty man could be trusted for his own good, that he was determined the experiment should have a fair trial, and would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it. And these declarations he repeated to me the oftener and more pointedly because he knew my suspicions of Colonel Hamilton's views, and probably had heard from him the same declarations which I had, to wit, "that the British constitution, with its unequal representation, corruption, and other existing abuses, was the most perfect government which had ever been established on earth, and that a reformation of those abuses would make it an impracticable government." I do believe that General Washington had not a firm confidence in the durability of our government. He was naturally distrustful of men, and inclined to gloomy apprehensions; and I was ever persuaded that a belief that we must at length end in something like a British

constitution had some weight in his adoption of the ceremonies of levees, birthdays, pompous meetings with Congress, and other forms of the same character, calculated to prepare us gradually for a change which he believed possible, and to let it come on with as little shock as might be to the public mind.

These are my opinions of General Washington, which I would vouch at the judgment seat of God, having been formed on an acquaintance of thirty years. I served with him in the Virginia legislature from 1769 to the Revolutionary war, and again a short time in Congress, until he left us to take command of the army. During the war and after it we corresponded occasionally, and in the four years of my continuance in the office of Secretary of State, our intercourse was daily, confidential, and cordial. After I retired from that office, great and malignant pains were taken by our federal monarchists, and not entirely without effect, to make him view me as a theorist, holding French principles of government, which would lead infallibly to licentiousness and anarchy. And to this he listened the more easily, from my known disapprobation of the British treaty. I never saw him afterwards, or these malignant insinuations should have been dissipated before his just judgment, as mists before the sun. I felt on his death, with my countrymen, that "verily a great man hath fallen this day in Israel."

More time and recollection would enable me to add many other traits of his character; but why add them to you who knew him well? And I cannot justify to myself a longer detention of your paper.

*Vale, proprieque tuam, me esse tibi persuadeas.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Adieu, and believe me to be sincerely yours."

## *The Federalist*

THE COMPLETED TEXT of the proposed new Constitution, evolved in four months' secret deliberation and debate by the convention called for that purpose, was first made public on September 27, 1787. The new form of government was to become an effective reality as soon as nine of the thirteen states should ratify it in separate conventions. Geographically, in the crisis which followed, the state of New York occupied a commanding position, since her territories would effectually divide the new nation into two sections. This advantage Governor Clinton undertook to use by attacking the Constitution in a New York newspaper, in the hope of securing concessions favorable to his state. To counteract this disintegrating force, Alexander Hamilton (1757-1804), an able young New York lawyer and later Secretary of the Treasury from 1789 to 1795 in Washington's cabinet and chief leader of the extreme Federalists, designed an extended series of newspaper articles, to explain, interpret, and defend the proposed scheme of government. To assist in this arduous task, he called upon John Jay (1745-1829), secretary of foreign affairs under the old government and later Chief Justice, who, however, supplied only a few papers. Hamilton next enlisted the Virginian, James Madison (1751-1836), later Secretary of State and President, who was then in New York and who as a member of the Constitutional Convention had kept the shorthand notes which are our main source of information regarding its discussions. Madison wrote about thirty of the eighty-five numbers, Jay five, and Hamilton the rest. The authorship of a few is joint or disputed.

The entire series, issued between October, 1787, and April, 1788, and published in book form in the latter month, is not only a political document of the first importance but also a work of effectively reasoned and cogently written prose which challenged comparison with the best British documents of a similar nature. Its influence, beyond its direct assistance in adopting the Constitution, was great in clarifying and elaborating its functions and implications and also to a considerable degree in actually shaping them in accordance with the centralizing Federalist views of the authors.

Probably the best edition of *The Federalist* is that of P. L. Ford (1898), based upon the original newspaper versions. Henry Cabot Lodge's edition (1923) goes back to the same sources. Other easily available reprints are those in Everyman's Library (n. d.), J. S. Bassett's *Selections from the Federalist* (1921), and the complete edition of E. G. Bourne (1937). See also E. G. Bourne, "The Authorship of *The Federalist*," in *American Historical Review*, II, 443-460.

Hamilton's works are edited by H. C. Lodge (12 vols., 1904). An excellent sampling of his work, including several *Federalist* essays, is included in F. C. Prescott's *Alexander Hamilton and*



*Thomas Jefferson, Representative Selections* (1934). The Hamilton MSS. are in the Library of Congress. Useful biographical and critical studies are those of H. C. Lodge (1882); J. C. Hamilton (1834); J. T. Morse, Jr. (1876); W. S. Culbertson (1911); C. G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Hamilton* (1925); and V. L. Parrington's chapter on Hamilton, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, I (1927), 292-307. For background of political theory, see J. S. Bassett, *The Federalist System, 1789-1801* (1906) and C. E. Merriam, *A History of American Political Theories* (1903).

Madison's *Writings* were edited by Gaillard Hunt (1900-1910), as was his important *Journal of the Debates in the Convention which Formed the Constitution* (1908). Biographies are those by J. Q. Adams (1850), W. C. Rives (3 vols., 1859-1868), Gaillard Hunt (1902), and A. E. Smith (1937). See also J. W. Pratt's article in *DAB*. The best account of Madison's later political life is given by Henry Adams in his *History of the United States, 1801-1817* (1889-1891).

### [ADVANTAGES OF THE UNION]

THE FEDERALIST, NO. X

By James Madison

AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished, as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations. The valuable improvements made by the American constitutions on the popular models, both ancient and modern, cannot certainly be too much admired; but it would be an unwarrantable partiality, to contend that they have as effectually obviated the danger on this side, as was wished and expected. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights

of the minor party, but by the superior force of interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence of known facts will not permit us to deny that they are in some degree true. It will be found, indeed, on a candid review of our situation, that some of the distresses under which we labor have been erroneously charged on the operation of our governments, but it will be found, at the same time, that other causes will not alone account for many of our heaviest misfortunes, and, particularly, for that prevailing and increasing distrust of public engagements, and alarm for private rights, which are echoed from one end of the continent to the other. These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects. There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease.

Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results, and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.

The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment of different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common

and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.

No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay, with greater reason, a body of men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time; yet what are many of the most important acts of legislation but so many judicial determinations, not indeed concerning the rights of single persons, but concerning the rights of large bodies of citizens? And what are the different classes of legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine? Is a law proposed concerning private debts? Is it a question to which the creditors are parties on one side and the debtors on the other. Justice ought to hold the balance between them. Yet the parties are, and must be, themselves the judges; and the most numerous party, or, in other words, the most powerful faction must be expected to prevail. Shall domestic manufactures be encouraged, and in what degree, by restrictions on foreign manufactures? are questions which would be differently decided by the landed and the manufacturing classes, and probably by neither with a sole regard to justice and the public good. The apportionment of taxes on the various descriptions of property is an act which seems to require the most exact impartiality; yet there is, perhaps, no legislative act in which greater opportunity and temptation are given to a predominant party to trample on the rules of justice. Every shilling with which they overburden the in-

ferior number is a shilling saved to their own pockets.

It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm. Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all without taking into view indirect and remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party may find in disregarding the rights of another or the good of the whole.

The inference to which we are brought is, that the *causes* of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its effects.

If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may convulse the society, but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed. Let me add that it is the great desideratum by which this form of government can be rescued from the opprobrium under which it has so long labored, and be recommended to the esteem and adoption of mankind.

By what means is this object obtainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such co-existent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide, we well know that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They are not found to be

such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in proportion to the number combined together, that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.

From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government itself, and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property, and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths. Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.

A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. Let us examine the points in which it varies from pure democracy, and we shall comprehend both the nature of the cure and the efficacy which it must derive from the Union.

The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic are: first, the delegation of the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under

such a regulation, it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people. The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious considerations.

In the first place, it is to be remarked that, however small the republic may be, the representatives must be raised to a certain number, in order to guard against the cabals of a few; and that, however large it may be, they must be limited to a certain number, in order to guard against the confusion of a multitude. Hence the number of representatives in the two cases not being in proportion to that of the two constituents, and being proportionally greater in the small republic, it follows that, if the proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than in the small republic, the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.

In the next place, as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practice with success the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried, and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to center in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established character.

It must be confessed that in this, as in most other cases, there is a mean, on both sides of which inconveniences will be found to lie. By enlarging too much the number of electors, you render the representative too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests; as by reducing it too much, you render him unduly attached to these, and too little fit to comprehend and pursue great and national objects. The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect;

the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures.

The other point of difference is, the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government; and it is this circumstance principally which renders factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in the latter. The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens, or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked that, where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always checked by distrust in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.

Hence, it clearly appears, that the same advantage which a republic has over a democracy, in controlling the effects of faction, is enjoyed by a large over a small republic—is enjoyed by the Union over the States composing it. Does the advantage consist in the substitution of representatives whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of injustice? It will not be denied that the representation of the Union will be most likely to possess these requisite endowments. Does it consist in the greater security afforded by a greater variety of parties, against the event of any one party being able to outnumber and oppress the rest? In an equal degree does the increased variety of parties comprised within the Union increase this security? Does it, in fine, consist in the greater obstacles opposed

to the concert and accomplishment of the secret wishes of an unjust and interested majority? Here, again, the extent of the Union gives it the most palpable advantage.

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the Confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of Federalists.

1787

## [ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS]

THE FEDERALIST, NO. XIV

By James Madison

We have seen the necessity of the Union, as our bulwark against foreign danger, as the conservator of peace among ourselves, as the guardian of our commerce and other common interests, as the only substitute for those military establishments which have subverted the liberties of the Old World, and as the proper antidote for the diseases of faction, which have proved fatal to other popular governments, and of which alarming symptoms have been betrayed by our own. All that remains, within this branch of our inquiries, is to take notice of an objection that may be drawn from the great extent of country which the Union embraces. A few observations on this subject will be the more proper, as it is perceived that the adversaries of the new Constitution are avail-

ing themselves of the prevailing prejudice with regard to the practicable sphere of republican administration, in order to supply, by imaginary difficulties, the want of those solid objections which they endeavor in vain to find.

The error which limits republican government to a narrow district has been unfolded and refuted in preceding papers. I remark here only that it seems to owe its rise and prevalence chiefly to the confounding of a republic with a democracy, applying to the former reasonings drawn from the nature of the latter. The true distinction between these forms was also adverted to on a former occasion. It is, that in a democracy the people meet and exercise the government in person; in a republic, they assemble and administer it by their representatives and agents. A democracy, consequently, will be confined to a small spot. A republic

may be extended over a large region.

To this accidental source of the error may be added the artifice of some celebrated authors, whose writings have had a great share in forming the modern standard of political opinions. Being subjects either of an absolute or limited monarchy, they have endeavored to heighten the advantages, or palliate the evils of those forms, by placing in comparison the vices and defects of the republican, and by citing as specimens of the latter the turbulent democracies of ancient Greece and modern Italy. Under the confusion of names, it has been an easy task to transfer to a republic observations applicable to a democracy only, and among others, the observation that it can never be established but among a small number of people, living within a small compass of territory.

Such a fallacy may have been the less perceived, as most of the popular governments of antiquity were of the democratic species, and even in modern Europe, to which we owe the great principle of representation, no example is seen of a government wholly popular, and founded, at the same time, wholly on that principle. If Europe has the merit of discovering this great mechanical power in government, by the simple agency of which the will of the largest political body may be concentrated, and its force directed to any object which the public good requires, America can claim

the merit of making the discovery the basis of unmix'd and extensive republics. It is only to be lamented that any of her citizens should wish to deprive her of the additional merit of displaying its full efficacy in the establishment of the comprehensive system now under her consideration.

As the natural limit of a democracy is that distance from the central point which will just permit the most remote citizens to assemble as often as their public functions demand, and will include no greater number than can join in those functions; so the natural limit of a republic is that distance from the center which will barely allow the representatives to meet as often as may be necessary for the administration of public affairs. Can it be said that the limits of the United States exceed this distance? It will not be said by those who recollect that the Atlantic coast is the longest side 20 of the Union, that during the term of thirteen years the representatives of the States have been almost continually assembled, and that the members from the most distant States are not chargeable with greater intermissions of attendance than those from the States in the neighborhood of Congress.

That we may form a juster estimate with regard to this interesting subject, let us resort to the actual dimensions of the Union. The limits, as fixed by the treaty of peace, are: on the east the Atlantic, on the south the latitude of thirty-one degrees, on the west the Mississippi, and on the north an irregular line running in some instances beyond the forty-fifth degree, in others falling as low as the forty-second. The southern shore of Lake Erie lies below that latitude. Computing the distance between the thirty-first and forty-fifth degrees, it amounts to nine hundred and seventy-three 40 common miles, computing it from thirty-one to forty-two degrees, to seven hundred and sixty-four miles and a half. Taking the mean for the distance, the amount will be eight hundred and sixty-eight miles and three fourths. The mean distance from the Atlantic to the Mississippi does not probably exceed seven hundred and fifty miles. On a comparison of this extent with that of several countries in Europe, the practicability of rendering our 50 system commensurate to it appears to be de-

monstrable. It is not a great deal larger than Germany, where a diet representing the whole empire is continually assembled; or than Poland before the late dismemberment, where another national diet was the depositary of the supreme power. Passing by France and Spain, we find that in Great Britain, inferior as it may be in size, the representatives of the northern extremity of the island have as far to travel to the national council as will be required of those of the most remote parts of the Union.

Favorable as this view of the subject may be, some observations remain which will place it in a light still more satisfactory.

In the first place it is to be remembered that the general government is not to be charged with the whole power of making and administering laws. Its jurisdiction is limited to certain enumerated objects, which concern all the members of the republic, but which are not to be attained by the separate provisions of any. The subordinate governments, which can extend their care to all those other objects which can be separately provided for, will retain their due authority and activity. Were it proposed by the plan of the convention to abolish the governments of the particular States, its adversaries would have some ground for their objection; though it would not be difficult to show that if they were abolished the general government would be compelled, by the principle of self-preservation, to reinstate them in their proper jurisdiction.

A second observation to be made is that the immediate object of the federal Constitution is to secure the union of the thirteen primitive States, which we know to be practicable; and to add to them such other States as may arise in their own bosoms, or in their neighborhoods, which we cannot doubt to be equally practicable. The arrangements that may be necessary for those angles and fractions of our territory which lies on our northwestern frontier, must be left to those whom further discoveries and experience will render more equal to the task.

Let it be remarked, in the third place, that the intercourse throughout the Union will be facilitated by new improvements. Roads will everywhere be shortened, and kept in better order; accommodations for travellers will be

multipled and meliorated; an interior navigation on our eastern side will be opened throughout, or nearly throughout, the whole extent of the thirteen States. The communication between the Western and Atlantic districts, and between different parts of each, will be rendered more and more easy by those numerous canals with which the beneficence of nature has intersected our country, and which art finds it so little difficult to connect and complete.

A fourth and still more important consideration is, that as almost every State will, on one side or other, be a frontier, and will thus find, in a regard to its safety, an inducement to make some sacrifices for the sake of the general protection; so the States which lie at the greatest distance from the heart of the Union, and which, of course, may partake least of the ordinary circulation of its benefits, will be at the same time immediately contiguous to foreign nations, and will consequently stand, on particular occasions, in greatest need of its strength and resources. It may be inconvenient for Georgia, or the States forming our western or northeastern borders, to send their representatives to the seat of government; but they would find it more so to struggle alone against an invading enemy, or even to support alone the whole expense of those precautions which may be dictated by the neighborhood of continual danger. If they should derive less benefit, therefore, from the Union in some respects than the less distant States, they will derive greater benefit from it in other respects, and thus the proper equilibrium will be maintained throughout.

I submit to you, my fellow-citizens, these considerations, in full confidence that the good sense which has so often marked your decisions will allow them their due weight and effect; and that you will never suffer difficulties, however formidable in appearance, or however fashionable the error on which they may be founded, to drive you into the gloomy and perilous scene into which the advocates for disunion would conduct you. Hearken not to the unnatural voice which tells you the people of America, knit together as they are by so many cords of affection, can no longer live together as members of the same family; can no longer continue the mutual guardians of

their mutual happiness; can no longer be fellow-citizens of one great, respectable, and flourishing empire. Hearken not to the voice which petulantly tells you that the form of government recommended for your adoption is a novelty in the political world; that it has never yet had a place in the theories of the wildest projectors; that it rashly attempts what it is impossible to accomplish. No, my countrymen, shut your ears against this unhallowed language. Shut your hearts against the poison which it conveys; the kindred blood which flows in the veins of American citizens, the mingled blood which they have shed in defence of their sacred rights, consecrate their Union, and excite horror at the idea of their becoming aliens, rivals, enemies. And if novelties are to be shunned, believe me, the most alarming of all novelties, the most wild of all projects, the most rash of all attempts, is that of rending us in pieces, in order to preserve our liberties and promote our happiness. But why is the experiment of an extended republic to be rejected, merely because it may comprise what is new? Is it not the glory of the people of America, that, whilst they have paid a decent regard to the opinions of former times and other nations, they have not suffered a blind veneration for antiquity, for custom, or for names, to overrule the suggestions of their own good sense, the knowledge of their own situation, and the lessons of their own experience? To this manly spirit, posterity will be indebted for the possession, and the world for the example, of the numerous innovations displayed on the American theater, in favor of private rights and public happiness. Had no important step been taken by the leaders of the Revolution for which a precedent could not be discovered, no government established of which an exact model did not present itself, the people of the United States might, at this moment, have been numbered among the melancholy victims of misguided councils, must at best have been laboring under the weight of some of those forms which have crushed the liberties of the rest of mankind. Happily for America, happily, we trust, for the whole human race, they pursued a new and more noble course. They accomplished a revolution which has no parallel in the annals of human

society. They reared the fabrics of governments which have no model on the face of the globe. They formed the design of a great Confederacy, which it is incumbent on their successors to improve and perpetuate. If their works betray imperfections, we wonder at the fewness of them. If they erred most in the structure of the Union, this was the work most difficult to be executed, this is the work which has been new-modeled by the act of your 10 convention, and it is that act on which you are now to deliberate and to decide.

1787

## [THE SUPREME COURT]

THE FEDERALIST, NO. LXXXI

By Alexander Hamilton

LET us now return to the partition of the judiciary authority between different courts, 20 and their relations to each other.

"The judicial power of the United States is (by the plan of the convention) to be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish."

That there ought to be one court of supreme and final jurisdiction is a proposition which is not likely to be contested. The reasons for it have been assigned in another place, and are too obvious to need repetition. The only question that seems to have been raised concerning it is whether it ought to be a distinct body or a branch of the legislature. The same contradiction is observable in regard to this matter which has been remarked in several other cases. The very men who object to the Senate as a court of impeachments, on the ground of an improper intermixture of powers, advocate, by implication at least, the propriety of vesting 40 the ultimate decision of all causes in the whole or in a part of the legislative body.

The arguments, or rather suggestions, upon which this charge is founded, are to this effect: "The authority of the proposed Supreme Court of the United States, which is to be a separate and independent body, will be superior to that of the legislature. The power of construing the laws according to the spirit of the Constitution, will enable that court to mould 50 them into whatever shape it may think proper;

especially as its decisions will not be in any manner subject to the revision or correction of the legislative body. This is as unprecedented as it is dangerous. In Britain, the judicial power, in the last resort, resides in the House of Lords, which is a branch of the legislature; and thus part of the British government has been imitated in the State constitutions in general. The Parliament of Great Britain, and the legislatures of the several States, can at any time rectify, by law, the exceptionable decisions of their respective courts. But the errors and usurpations of the Supreme Court of the United States will be uncontrollable and remediless." Thus, upon examination, will be found to be made up altogether of false reasoning upon misconceived fact.

In the first place, there is not a syllable in the plan under consideration which directly empowers the national courts to construe the laws according to the spirit of the Constitution, or which gives them any greater latitude in this respect than may be claimed by the courts of every State. I admit, however, that the Constitution ought to be the standard of construction for the laws, and that wherever there is an evident opposition, the laws ought to give place to the Constitution. But this doctrine is not deducible from any circumstance peculiar to the plan of the convention, but from the general theory of a limited Constitution; and as far as it is true, is equally applicable to most, if not to all the State governments. There can be no objection, therefore, on this account, to the federal judicature which will not serve to condemn every constitution that attempts to set bounds to legislative discretion.

But perhaps the force of the objection may be thought to consist in the particular organization of the Supreme Court; in its being composed of a distinct body of magistrates, instead of being one of the branches of the legislature, as in the government of Great Britain and that of the State. To insist upon this point, the authors of the objection must renounce the meaning they have labored to annex the celebrated maxim, requiring a separation of the departments of power. It shall, nevertheless, be conceded to them agreeably to the interpretation given to that maxim in the course of



these papers, that it is not violated by vesting the ultimate power of judging in a part of the legislative body. But though this be not an absolute violation of that excellent rule, yet it verges so nearly upon it as on this account alone to be less eligible than the mode preferred by the convention. From a body which had even a partial agency in passing bad laws we could rarely expect a disposition to temper and moderate them in the application. The same spirit which had operated in making them would be too apt in interpreting them; still less could it be expected that men who had infringed the Constitution in the character of legislators would be disposed to repair the breach in the character of judges. Nor is this all. Every reason which recommends the tenure of good behavior for judicial offices militates against placing the judiciary power, in the last resort, in a body composed of men chosen for a limited period. There is an absurdity in referring the determination of causes, in the first instance, to judges of permanent standing; in the last, to those of a temporary and mutable constitution. And there is a still greater absurdity in subjecting the decisions of men, selected for their knowledge of the laws, acquired by long and laborious study, to the revision and control of men who, for want of the same advantage, cannot but be deficient in that knowledge. The members of the legislature will rarely be chosen with a view to those qualifications which fit men for the stations of judges; and as, on this account, there will be great reason to apprehend all the ill consequences of defective information, so, on account of the natural propensity of such bodies to party divisions, there will be no less reason to fear that the pestilential breath of faction may poison the fountains of justice. The habit of being continually marshaled on opposite sides will be too apt to stifle the voice both of law and of equity.

These considerations teach us to applaud the wisdom of those States who have committed the judicial power, in the last resort, not to a part of the legislature, but to distinct and independent bodies of men. Contrary to the supposition of those who have represented the plan of the convention, in this respect, as novel and unprecedented, it is but a copy of

the constitutions of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia; and the preference which has been given to those models is highly to be commended.

It is not true, in the second place, that the Parliament of Great Britain, or the legislatures of the particular States, can rectify the exceptional decisions of their respective courts in any other sense than might be done by a future legislature of the United States. The theory, neither of the British, nor the State constitutions, authorizes the reversal of a judicial sentence by a legislative act. Nor is there anything in the proposed Constitution, more than in either of them, by which it is forbidden. In the former, as well as in the latter, the impropriety of the thing, on the general principles of law and reason, is the sole obstacle. A legislature, without exceeding its province, cannot reverse a determination once made in a particular case; though it may prescribe a new rule for future cases. This is the principle, and it applies in all its consequences, exactly in the same manner and extent, to the State governments, as to the national government now under consideration. Not the least difference can be pointed out in any view of the subject.

It may in the last place be observed that the supposed danger of judiciary encroachments on the legislature authority, which has been upon many occasions reiterated, is in reality a phantom. Particular misconstructions and contraventions of the will of the legislature may now and then happen; but they can never be so extensive as to amount to an inconvenience, or in any sensible degree to affect the order of the political system. This may be inferred with certainty from the general nature of the judicial power, from the objects to which it relates, from the manner in which it is exercised, from its comparative weakness, and from its total incapacity to support its usurpations by force. And the inference is greatly fortified by the consideration of the important constitutional check which the power of instituting impeachments in one part of the legislative body, and of determining upon them in the other, would give to that body upon the members of the judicial department. This is alone

a complete security. There never can be danger that the judges, by a series of deliberate usurpations on the authority of the legislature, would hazard the united resentment of the body intrusted with it, while this body was possessed of the means of punishing their presumption by degrading them from their stations. While this ought to remove all apprehensions on the subject, it affords, at the same time, a cogent argument for constituting the Senate a court for the trial of impeachments.

Having now examined and, I trust, removed the objections to the distinct and independent organisation of the Supreme Court, I proceed to consider the propriety of the power of constituting inferior courts, and the relations which will subsist between these and the former.

The power of constituting inferior courts is evidently calculated to obviate the necessity of having recourse to the Supreme Court in every case of federal cognizance. It is intended to enable the national government to institute or authorize, in each State or district of the United States, a tribunal competent to the determination of matters of national jurisdiction within its limits.

But why, it is asked, might not the same purpose have been accomplished by the instrumentality of the State courts? This admits of different answers. Though the fitness and competency of those courts should be allowed in the utmost latitude, yet the substance of the power in question may still be regarded as a necessary part of the plan, if it were only to empower the national legislature to commit to them the cognizance of causes arising out of the national Constitution. To confer the power of determining such causes upon the existing courts of the several States, would perhaps be as much "to constitute tribunals" as to create new courts with the like power. But ought not a more direct and explicit provision to have been made in favor of the State courts? There are, in my opinion, substantial reasons against such a provision: the most discerning cannot foresee how far the prevalence of a local spirit may be found to disqualify the local tribunals for the jurisdiction of national causes; whilst every man may discover that courts constituted like those of some of the

States would be improper channels of the judicial authority of the Union. State judges, holding their offices during pleasure, or from year to year, will be too little independent to be relied upon for an inflexible execution of the national laws. And if there was a necessity for confiding to them the original cognizance of causes arising under those laws, there would be a correspondent necessity for leaving the door of appeal as wide as possible. In proportion to the grounds of confidence in, or distrust of, the subordinate tribunals, ought to be the facility or difficulty of appeals. And well satisfied as I am of the propriety of the appellate jurisdiction, in the several classes of causes to which it is extended by the plan of the convention, I should consider everything calculated to give, in practice, an unrestrained course to appeals as a source of public and private inconvenience.

I am not sure but that it will be found highly expedient and useful to divide the United States into four or five or half a dozen districts; and to institute a federal court in each district in lieu of one in every State. The judges of these courts, with the aid of the State judges, may hold circuits for the trial of causes in the several parts of the respective districts. Justice through them may be administered with ease and despatch, and appeals may be safely circumscribed within a narrow compass. This plan appears to me at present the most eligible of any that could be adopted, and in order to it, it is necessary that the power of constituting inferior courts should exist in the full extent in which it is to be found in the proposed Constitution.

These reasons seem sufficient to satisfy a candid mind that the want of such a power would have been a great defect in the plan. Let us now examine in what manner the judicial authority is to be distributed between the supreme and the inferior courts of the Union.

The Supreme Court is to be invested with original jurisdiction only "in cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party." Public ministers of every class are the immediate representatives of their sovereigns. All questions in which they are concerned are so directly connected with the public peace

that, as well for the preservation of this as out of respect to the sovereignties they represent, it is both expedient and proper that such questions should be submitted in the first instance to the highest judicatory of the nation. Though consuls have not in strictness a diplomatic character, yet as they are the public agents of the nations to which they belong, the same observation is in a great measure applicable to them. In cases in which a State might happen to be a party it would ill suit its dignity to be turned over to an inferior tribunal.

Though it may rather be a digression from the immediate subject of this paper, I shall take occasion to mention here a supposition which has excited some alarm upon very mistaken grounds. It has been suggested that an assignment of the public securities of one State to the citizens of another would enable them to prosecute that State in the federal courts for the amount of those securities; a suggestion which the following considerations prove to be without foundation.

It is inherent in the nature of sovereignty not to be amenable to the suit of an individual without its consent. This is general sense and the general practice of mankind, and the exemption, as one of the attributes of sovereignty, is now enjoyed by the government of every State in the Union. Unless, therefore, there is a surrender of this immunity in the plan of the convention, it will remain with the States, and the danger intimated must be merely ideal. The circumstances which are necessary to produce an alienation of State sovereignty were discussed in considering the article of taxation, and need not be repeated here. A recurrence to the principles there established will satisfy us that there is no color to pretend that the State governments would, by the adoption of that plan, be divested of the privilege of paying their own debts in their own way, free from every constraint but that which flows from the obligations of good faith. The contracts between a nation and individuals are only binding on the conscience of the sovereign and have no pretensions to a compulsive force. They confer no right of action independent of the sovereign will. To what purpose would it be to authorize suits against States for the debts they owe?

How could recoveries be enforced? It is evident it could not be done without waging war against the contracting State; and to ascribe to the federal courts, by mere implication, and in destruction of a pre-existing right of the State governments, a power which would involve such a consequence, would be altogether forced and unwarrantable.

Let us resume the train of our observations. We have seen that the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court would be confined to two classes of causes, and those of a nature rarely to occur. In all other cases of federal cognizance, the original jurisdiction would appertain to the inferior tribunals; and the Supreme Court would have nothing more than an appellate jurisdiction, "with such exceptions and under such regulations as the Congress shall make."

The propriety of this appellate jurisdiction has been scarcely called in question in regard to matters of law; but the clamors have been loud against it as applied to matters of fact. Some well-intentioned men in this State, deriving their notions from the language and forms which obtain in our courts, have been induced to consider it as an implied superseding of the trial by jury in favor of the civil-law mode of trial which prevails in our courts of admiralty, probate, and chancery. A technical sense has been affixed to the term "appellate," which, in our law parlance, is commonly used in reference to appeals in the course of the civil law. But if I am not misinformed, the same meaning would not be given to it in any part of New England. There an appeal from one jury to another is familiar both in language and practice, and is even a matter of course, until there have been two verdicts on one side. The word "appellate," therefore, will not be understood in the same sense in New England as in New York, which shows the impropriety of a technical interpretation derived from the jurisprudence of any particular State. The expression, taken in the abstract, denotes nothing more than the power of one tribunal to review the proceedings of another, either as to the law or fact, or both. The mode of doing it may depend on ancient custom or legislative provision (in a new government it must depend on the latter), and may be with or without the aid of a jury, as may be judged advisable. If,

therefore, the re-examination of a fact once determined by a jury should in any case be admitted under the proposed Constitution, it may be so regulated as to be done by a second jury, either by remanding the cause to the court below for a second trial of the fact, or by directing an issue immediately out of the Supreme Court,

But it does not follow that the re-examination of a fact once ascertained by a jury will be permitted in the Supreme Court. Why may not it be said, with the strictest propriety, when a writ of error is brought from an inferior to a superior court of law in this State, that the latter has jurisdiction of the fact as well as the law? It is true it cannot institute a new inquiry concerning the fact, but it takes cognizance of it as it appears upon the record, and pronounces the law arising upon it. This is jurisdiction of both fact and law, nor is it even possible to separate them. Though the common-law courts of this State ascertain disputed facts by a jury, yet they unquestionably have jurisdiction of both fact and law and accordingly when the former is agreed in the pleadings, they have no recourse to a jury, but proceed at once to judgment. I contend, therefore, on this ground, that the expressions, "appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact," do not necessarily imply a re-examination in the Supreme Court of facts decided by juries in the inferior courts

The following train of ideas may well be imagined to have influenced the convention in relation to this particular provision. The appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court (it may have been argued) will extend to causes determinable in different modes, some in the course of the *Common Law*, others in the course of the *CIVIL LAW*. In the former, the revision of the law only will be, generally speaking, the proper province of the Supreme Court; in the latter, the re-examination of the fact is agreeable to usage, and in some cases, of which prize causes are an example, might be essential to the preservation of the public peace. It is therefore necessary that the appellate jurisdiction should, in certain cases, extend in the broadest sense to matters of fact. It will not answer to make an express exception of cases which shall have been originally tried

by a jury, because in the courts of some of the States all causes are tried in this mode, and such an exception would preclude the revision of matters of fact, as well where it might be proper, as where it might be improper. To avoid all inconveniences, it will be safest to declare generally that the Supreme Court shall possess appellate jurisdiction both as to law and fact, and that this jurisdiction shall be subject to such exceptions and regulations as the national legislature may prescribe. This will enable the government to modify it in such a manner as will best answer the ends of public justice and security.

This view of the matter, at any rate, puts it out of all doubt that the supposed abolition of the trial by jury, by the operation of this provision, is fallacious and untrue. The legislature of the United States would certainly have full power to provide that in appeals to the Supreme Court there should be no re-examination of facts where they had been tried in the original causes by juries. This would certainly be an authorized exception, but if, for the reason already intimated, it should be thought too extensive, it might be qualified with a limitation to such causes only as are determinable at common law in that mode of trial.

The amount of the observations hitherto made on the authority of the judicial department is this that it has been carefully restricted to those causes which are manifestly proper for the cognizance of the national judicature; that in the partition of this authority a very small portion of original jurisdiction has been preserved to the Supreme Court, and the rest consigned to the subordinate tribunals; that the Supreme Court will possess an appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, in all the cases referred to them, both subject to any exceptions and regulations which may be thought advisable; that this appellate jurisdiction does, in no case, abolish the trial by jury; and that an ordinary degree of prudence and integrity in the national councils will insure us solid advantages from the establishment of the proposed judiciary, without exposing us to any of the inconveniences which have been predicted from that source.

## 1732 — George Washington — 1799

WASHINGTON's outstanding importance in American history has lent significance to his state documents and personal letters. During the two crucial eight-year periods of the war and of his presidency, he dominated and shaped the course of American life. One of the few elderly leaders at the adoption of our national form of government, and greatly concerned regarding the disorders preceding that event and our later involvement with revolutionary France, Washington drew closer to the extreme aristocratic Federalist viewpoint. He liked and admired Jefferson but feared the influence which Jefferson was gaining with the popular party, and in his *Farewell Address* argued with equal earnestness against foreign entanglements and government by parties. In this address, as in most of his public documents, the wording is mainly that of his secretary, Hamilton; but the ideas were those of Washington himself, who personally revised Hamilton's draft before it was made public.

The best edition of Washington's writings is by W. C. Ford (14 vols., 1889-1893). J. C. Fitzpatrick edited *The Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799* (1925). Among notable biographies are those by John Marshall (1804-1807); Washington Irving (1855-1859); H. C. Lodge (1898); Woodrow Wilson (1897); W. C. Ford (1899); Rupert Hughes (1926 and 1927); and Bernard Fay (1931). Allan Nevins wrote the excellent article in the *Britannica*, 14th ed. See also A. B. Hart, "A Study of Washington Biography," *Publishers' Weekly*, CXXIX, 820-822 (1931); John Hay, Jr., "George Washington, Literary Man," *ibid.*, CXXI, 943-944 (1932); G. K. Chesterton, "George Washington," *Fortnightly Review* (March 1, 1932); A. R. Beatty, ed., "Letters of George Washington," *Yale Review*, XXI, 466-482 (1932); and M. J. Moses, "His Excellency, George Washington," *Theatre Arts Monthly*, XVI, 137-146 (1932).

## FAREWELL ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Fellow-Citizens,

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being con-

sidered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country;—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but act under and am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have

<sup>1</sup> Delivered Sept. 17, 1796. Hamilton and Madison assisted in framing the address.

twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety, and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the oppor-

tunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States under the auspices of liberty may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption, of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> on relinquishing command of the army

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity in every shape, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however power-

fully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable

value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments 10 which under any form of government are unauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. 20 With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to

be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the executive and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole



people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party; often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community, and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretences. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, ex-

poses to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed, but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public coun-

cils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, fomenting occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence if not with favor upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification

of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation, for though this in one instance may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently

prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness

is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities

do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making ac-

quisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far I mean as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There

can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you, and to the world. To myself the assurance of my own conscience is that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take and was bound in duty and interest to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that,

according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

~ IV ~

*The Rise of  
Romanticism  
and of  
National Literary  
Consciousness*



## The Rise of Romanticism and National Literary Consciousness

1788-1820

The period of approximately thirty years between the close of the Revolution and that of the War of 1812 was one of marked and significant changes. It was an age of shift from "steady habits" to reckless speculation and "projects," from dominance by conservative aristocratic Federalism to that of blatant lower middle-class democracy, and from formality and respect in manners to loud and free self-assertiveness. It was a generation in which knee breeches were replaced by pantaloons, powdered wigs and queues by short hair, the capacious dresses of the Revolutionary period by "bare arms and bosoms," and the stately minuet by the "lascivious" waltz. Abroad, it was the generation in which the hope of the world was kindled by the French Revolution, to be blotted out by the Reign of Terror, the ensuing military dictatorship of Bonaparte, and the overthrow of the Napoleonic war machine by a coalition of European autocracies. At home, it saw the advance from uncertain participation in a new experiment in nationalism, through our first shift of political administration and our second major war, to assured unity and an Era of Good Feeling; and from an insecure position on the North American continent, shared with the powerful monarchies of France, Great Britain, and Spain, to the domination of that continent, through the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.

It was a period of international complications which explain Washington's and Jefferson's fears of "entangling alliances." Until 1815, the United States still stood politically facing Europe rather than westward, and European disturbances were reflected in American party alignments, the Democratic-Republicans favoring France as the Federalists drew closer to agreement with England. Hardly was Washington's administration seated when the defensive military alliance with France which had enabled us to win and end the war at Yorktown was invoked by the new French republic, now attacked by a strong league of royalist enemies. Sympathy for the revolutionists at first nearly brought us into active participation, but the altered character of the revolution, the bloodshed during the Terror, the arrogance of Genêt, the French ambassador, and Washington's desire to avoid a new war with England led to a virtual nullification of the alliance. This caused the loss of French friendship and an undeclared naval war during which French and American privateers preyed at will upon each other's shipping. Another brief naval war was necessary to quell the piratical depredations upon American ships and commerce by the Mohammedan nations of northern Africa. Meanwhile, the



increasing tension of the conflict between Napoleon and his foes involved American shipping through the British blockade of France, and Napoleon's counter decrees. England, her naval personnel depleted by easy desertions to American vessels, assumed the right of search and removal of supposedly British seamen. So offensive did this procedure become that when America was inevitably drawn into the world war, it was on the side of the Napoleonic military dictatorship, though against the sentiments of a large section of the country, expressed in the somewhat seditious Hartford Convention of 1814. The only end gained by this inglorious war, in which brilliant victories on the sea and at New Orleans were offset by the British capture and burning of the capital at Washington, was that henceforth the United States was never again menaced by attack from any European power. America thereafter turned her face westward and began a long era of international isolation.

As the outstanding figure in the later Provincial period was that of Franklin, and in the Revolutionary period that of Washington, so Thomas Jefferson dominates the history of the succeeding period. As Secretary of State in the coalition cabinet of Washington's first administration, he was disappointed and alarmed by Hamilton's centralizing policy. Too much power was centered in the hands of Adams's "the rich, the well-born, and the able"; too little consideration was being given to the rights of Hamilton's "great beast, the people." Hence, while still in the cabinet, Jefferson began quietly organizing opposition sentiment by his extensive correspondence with men of similar views, aided during 1791-1793 by Freneau's *National Gazette*. After his retirement from the cabinet, he devoted his energies to developing the scattered and disorganized dissent throughout the country into an effective party. Jefferson's aides were abused by the Federalists as seditious rebels, and their followers as the "rabble mob"; but aided by the unpopularity of Jay's Treaty (1795), they were ready to challenge the Federalists in the first contested presidential election, in 1796, and were defeated by only three votes in the electoral college. The subsequent Federalist factional quarrels of Adams's administration and the termination of hostilities with France weakened the hold of the party in power. Jefferson's agrarian ideals appealed to the farming population. His political theories also proved attractive to a number of able refugees from Great Britain, Ireland, and France, who became enthusiastic supporters. The unwise Alien and Sedition Acts, designed to suppress attacks on the administration, also reacted unfavorably to Adams. In the election of 1800, New York swung to the Democrats, and Jefferson was elected president, the first to govern from the new capital at Washington.

Thus was brought about, without the disastrous effects prophesied by the Federalists, the first of a series of orderly revolutions in power during our political history, all accomplished peacefully save that of 1860. The new president wisely

built upon the foundations laid by twelve years of Federalist planning, but the political attitude of the administration was changed. The normal development of domestic prosperity, with the repeal of the obnoxious Alien and Sedition laws, the reorganization of the treasury system, the defeat of the Barbary pirates, and the reduction of the national debt and taxes increased his popularity so greatly that in the election of 1804 he received all the electoral votes except those of Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> When Jefferson withdrew in 1809 to return to his pursuit of science, philosophy, and education, his friend and secretary of state, James Madison, was easily elected for two terms; and in 1816, the Federalists, discredited by their dubious dealings in the War of 1812, disappeared from the picture without the control of a single electoral vote.

Synchronous with the loss of political power by the Federalists was the decline in influence of the surviving pre-Revolutionary aristocracy (except in the plantation areas of the South), with an accompanying decline in the public social tone. The national spirit became noisier and more blatant, as shown in the bombastic language of the newspapers, which was satirized by Dennie, Fessenden, and the youthful Irving. The social instability and cultural uncouthness of the times, especially in the newly settled western territories, were good-humoredly ridiculed by Brackenridge in *Modern Chivalry*. Political vituperation became more unrestrained, even Washington's later years being embittered by such abuse in certain opposition newspapers. Federalist as well as Democratic editors were guilty of this increased coarseness, assailing Jefferson with charges of atheism and personal immorality, while for the rank and file of his party there were no descriptive terms too contemptuous.

The population and settled area of the country grew rapidly. The 3,900,000 people of the 1790 census had nearly doubled, rising to 7,300,000 by 1810. Virginia, with almost a million inhabitants, was nearly outstripped by New York, with Pennsylvania (800,000), North Carolina, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Maryland following in order. The largest city was now New York, with just under 100,000 population; Philadelphia followed with 53,000; Baltimore, 46,000; and Boston, 35,000. Three new states, Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee, were admitted to the Union before 1800, Ohio in 1803, and Louisiana in 1812. Territories had been organized, including the Old Northwest and the present Alabama and Mississippi. The boundary of settlement in 1810 crossed central Maine and northern New York, central Ohio and southern Indiana and Illinois to the area around St. Louis, skirted the Mississippi to Tennessee, and turned back through Alabama to the border of Florida,<sup>2</sup> still a possession of Spain. The area around the mouth of the Mississippi was occupied by a mixed population of Creoles, Spaniards,

<sup>1</sup> The only serious setback to democracy in this administration, not appreciated at the time, was the Marbury versus Madison decision in 1803, in which the Supreme Court, under the Federalist Chief Justice John Marshall, assumed the right not originally delegated to it of passing upon the constitutionality of enactments of Congress.

French, Negroes, and a few Americans. The total area at least partially settled was nearly twice that of 1786. The vastness of the territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon in 1803 for \$11,000,000 almost staggered Jefferson, relieved as he was to be rid of a dangerous foreign neighbor west of the Mississippi. It also alarmed the New England Federalists as they sensed the changed balance of influence which the peopling of such a great area would bring about. This fear was intensified when the election of 1812 brought into Congress a new set of active young leaders from the Southwest, the "War Hawks," who were influential in bringing the country into hostilities with England.

Until about 1807, the country prospered greatly, with American shippers profiting from the sale of supplies to the warring nations of Europe. As the conflict between England and France became more crucial and threatened to wipe out American ocean commerce, Jefferson, determined upon peace, proposed with the approval of Congress an Embargo Act, whose effect upon New England merchants and shipowners was equally disastrous. Deprived of their traditional source of income, they turned, however, with great effectiveness to a reinvestment of their funds in mills built up along their rivers, for the manufacture of goods hitherto imported from England. By the end of the War of 1812, the capital invested in cotton factories alone had leaped from half a million to nearly forty million. The industry employed a hundred thousand men and women, mostly native New Englanders. Though the re-entry of British goods to American markets when peace was declared caused a temporary setback, these industries continued, aided by the Tariff of 1816, to make the United States independent of foreign manufacturers and to give New England the industrial supremacy that was greatly to augment her influence throughout the nineteenth century.

Though the cultural progress of the country did not keep pace with its physical development, the period witnessed an enormous increase in the number and circulation of newspapers, which constituted the chief reading of a large portion of the people. Many of these were short-lived, and most were violently partisan. The late 1780's saw the rise of the first important magazines, the *Columbian Magazine* (1786) and the *American Museum* (1787) at Philadelphia, both snuffed out by an increase in postal rates in 1792, and the *Massachusetts Magazine* (1789-1796) at Boston. Most influential of the later magazines were the *Monthly Anthology* (1803-1811) of Boston, and the *Port Folio* (1801-1827) at Philadelphia. The spread of schools was slower than that of settlement, but was aided by the desire of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian pioneers to maintain an educated ministry. Fourteen colleges were chartered during the two decades before 1800, mostly by religious denominations: Washington and Jefferson (1781), Dickinson (1783), Franklin and Marshall (1787), and Pittsburgh (1787), all in Pennsylvania; Vermont (1791), Williams (1792), and Bowdoin (1794), in New England; Transylvania (1780) in

Kentucky; St. Johns (1784) in Maryland; Washington and Lee (1787) in Virginia; Union (1795) in New York; and the new state universities in North Carolina (1789), in Tennessee (1794), and in Georgia (chartered 1785, opened 1801).

Religiously, the Revolution demoralized the reigning churches of the North and South—Calvinism and Anglicanism—alike, and caused a laxity of religious observance which Dr. Dwight deplored in his *Triumph of Infidelity* (1794). Meanwhile, a renewal of the Great Awakening, precipitated by the sensational preaching of revivalists like the celebrated Lorenzo Dow, greatly increased the numbers of the Baptists and Methodists. As fundamentalists, they profited by the hostile reaction against religious freethinking which followed the Reign of Terror in France and the publication of *The Age of Reason* in 1794 and 1796. Paine's wide reputation as a revolutionist caused the popular mind to associate henceforth political radicalism with religious radicalism, to the general discredit of both. The Episcopalians suffered especially for a time, owing to suspicion of loyalty to England and the refusal of the Archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate rebellious subjects as bishops. At length, after a backdoor ordination by the Anglican primate of Scotland, they regained prestige and retained their hold on the leading families, though not the rank and file, of the Southern and Middle States. In the meantime, they had lost King's Chapel, oldest Episcopalian church in New England, to the newly risen Unitarians.

As has been seen, the Great Awakening split the New England Congregationalist Church into the enthusiastic New Calvinists, following Edwards's example, and the more decorous and conservative Old Calvinists of the seaboard towns. The former combined a rigorous moralism and fundamentalist orthodoxy with an evangelistic attitude: Timothy Dwight, in defending trinitarian orthodoxy, could praise

That strange new-birth, that Methodistic grace.

Among the Old Calvinists, however, during the eighteenth century the innate wickedness of man's nature came to be questioned in the preaching of liberal clergymen in Boston like Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766) and Charles Chauncy (1705-1787). This tendency was parallel to, though probably not necessarily prompted by, the ideas of Rousseau and of the deists in England and France. As Barrett Wendell pointed out,<sup>1</sup> it had become difficult by that time for reasonable Boston folk to regard their decent and orderly neighbors as so inherently bad that only the sacrifice of a Son of God could avail to save them from eternal punishment; and accordingly this doctrine gradually lost its meaning for thoughtful liberals.

<sup>1</sup> His chapter on Unitarianism in *A Literary History of America* (1902) is still the best brief interpretation of the movement in New England.

King's Chapel, though Episcopalian in form, was fractured strongly with Congregationalism, which was the ancestral religion of many of its members. After the Revolution, while ordination was still refused to the American Anglican clergy, the sexton, James Freeman, and his vestrymen organized themselves in 1785 as an independent church with a revised American ritual. This, when adopted, omitted any reference to the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—and stressed the divine unity of God and the loving inspiration of God's word, and is generally taken as the first avowal in America of the liberal faith known as Unitarianism. William Ellery Channing, the chief exponent of the new faith, in his sermons and in his essay, "The Moral Argument against Calvinism," stressed the kindly and forgiving nature of God and the necessity for interpreting the Scriptures according to the light of reason. The central idea of Unitarianism was not any of the things which it discarded—the literal infallibility of the Bible, including the story of the fall of Adam; the threefold nature of the Deity; the necessary divinity of Christ—but its positive affirmation of a conception of human nature not depraved but capable of almost infinite goodness and perfectibility, as witness the example of Jesus of Nazareth. By thus substituting an optimistic for a deterministic religious philosophy, it liberated, with surprising results, the active and energetic New England spirit from the inhibitions which Calvinism had imposed upon it for nearly two centuries, and especially upon its self-expression in drama, secular painting, music, fiction, and philosophy.

Unitarianism also gave Christian respectability and an organized status to liberal religious thought, which deism, after ineffectual attempts to establish itself as a church in America,<sup>1</sup> had failed to achieve. By 1800, without a formal break, most of the older and more influential churches from Plymouth to Portland had embraced Unitarianism; and within a generation it had become, paralleled by the milder Universalism in the interior towns, the socially established religion of the New England seaboard. Though it never greatly expanded, because of its lack of proselyting zeal, its cultural influence was beyond all proportion to its numbers. It is largely through its liberalizing contacts that other American denominations, Protestant and Catholic alike, have come to place decreased emphasis upon credal differences and to stress social and intellectual values in religion. Its influence was magnified by the fine spiritual and intellectual stature of such early leaders as William Ellery Channing, James Freeman, Joseph Buckminster, Edward Everett Hale, the Emersons, Jared Sparks, Thomas Starr King, John Pierpont, Edward Everett, Theodore Parker, and Sylvester Judd; and it is not surprising that the greater New England writers of the next century were almost without exception Unitarians.

American literature between the two wars with England, in contrast with the

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Koch, *Republicanism Religion: the American Revolution and the Cult of Reason* (1953), 70ff. Unitarianism included some ideas already associated with deism, such as reliance on reason, faith in "natural deism," and parallelism between natural and spiritual laws.

material advances, was depressingly inferior. Against an unusually brilliant generation of British writers, including Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Scott, Campbell, Moore, and Jane Austen, the United States could oppose only such writers as Freneau and the Connecticut poets, Charles Brockden Brown, Joseph Dennie, and William Dunlap. As a result, the tone of American criticism was most often one of querulous self-assertion with not much to be assertive about, mixed with an acute sensitiveness to contemptuous notices—or more provocative still, no notice at all—in the British press and magazines. From Noah Webster to Bryant, there was a call for a distinctive American literature, but little idea as to what its distinctiveness ought to be. Naturally, the models used were those of the preceding generation in England, the literary descendants of Milton, Butler, Pope, Addison, and Swift; Thomson, Gray, Churchill, Cowper, and the graveyard poets; Macpherson, Richardson, Godwin, and the Gothic romancers; Johnson, Goldsmith, Sheridan, and the sentimental dramatists.

American national poetry was ushered in by the inflated epics of Dwight and Barlow, the Federalist satire of *The Anarchiad* (1786–1787) and *The Echo* (1791–1805), and the patriotic and reflective lyrics of Philip Freneau. While the former looked back to neo-classical influence, Freneau was fully abreast of the pre-romantic spirit of his time. He supplemented his college acquaintance with Milton, Thomson, and Gray with several years' experience at sea and in the semi-tropical islands of the West Indies, where the exotic scenery and climate stirred him to lyrical appreciation. In this and in his enthusiasm for liberty, he is a forerunner of Shelley, as he is of Wordsworth in a few delicate nature poems. He was, also, in poetry and prose, the first important American writer to sentimentalize the American Indian. At the turn of the century, the most active poets were satirists of democracy like Thomas G. Fessenden, the descriptive writer Thomas Odiorne of New Hampshire, and writers of patriotic songs or humanitarian lyrics such as Joseph Hopkinson, Francis Scott Key, and Mrs. Sarah W. Morton.

The novel in America got its belated start in 1789, almost fifty years after Richardson's *Pamela*, with the appearance of the inferior *Power of Sympathy*, probably by William Hill Brown.<sup>1</sup> There followed a series of similar works mostly by Massachusetts writers under the influence of Richardson. Best of these was Mrs. Hannah Foster's *The Coquette* (1797),<sup>2</sup> which shows some skill in characterization and in handling the epistolary type of narrative dealing with a plot based on an actual seduction in her husband's family. By far the most popular novel for many decades in America was the sentimental *Charlotte Temple* of Mrs. Susanna Rowson, published in London in 1790 but reprinted in over sixty editions after her coming to the United States in 1792. Much more significant, though structurally weak as a

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of this anonymous pioneer novel is discussed by Milton Ellis in "The Author of the First American Novel," *American Literature*, IV, 359–368 (Jan., 1933).

<sup>2</sup> Edited, with an introduction by H. R. Brown, in the Facsimile Text Society Series (1939).

novel, was H. H. Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*, with its interchapters of satirical comment somewhat after the fashion of Fielding and Sterne. The magazines abounded in sentimental tales falling far short of effective short-story technique but often attempting or pretending to be American by using American names and localities for their imitative or transplanted plots.

The one novelist of ability was Charles Brockden Brown of Philadelphia, who during two years in New York City turned out six novels revealing undoubted power but lacking in symmetry and careful development or style. They combine the moralizing purpose of Richardson with the Gothic devices of Mrs. Radcliffe and the social-revolutionary interests and style of William Godwin. Brown regularly used an American setting and characters, though not often maturely developed. He utilized skilfully media of dramatic interest, such as religious mania, yellow fever epidemics, Indian warfare, ventriloquism, and the machinations of secret societies, with no lack of sensational episodes, and genuine power in combining suspense and the element of horror, in which he is a noteworthy forerunner of Poe.

The removal after the Revolution of the ban of legal prohibition or popular disapproval upon the theater in New York, Philadelphia, and later Boston, with the erection of permanent playhouses and the growth of a leisured class sufficient for patronage, gave the drama a real start. The survivors of the American Company, led by Lewis Hallam, Jr., returned from the West Indies and established themselves at New York. A schism led to the founding of a rival company at Philadelphia in 1790 under the comedian Thomas Wignell. Both companies imported fresh actors from London, notably Thomas A. Cooper and the first of the noted Jefferson family, and carried on a spirited though precarious rivalry through the yellow-fever years of the 1790's, to emerge into greater security and prosperity in the new century. The man whose productivity and self-sacrificing devotion did most to establish the drama in America was William Dunlap (1766-1839) of New York. He became manager of the American Company in 1795 and before leaving it, bankrupt, ten years later, had turned out over fifty plays, mostly adaptations of German and other European originals. Like Royall Tyler, whose nationalistic *The Contrast* (1787) was the first native dramatic success, Dunlap attempted to foster an American drama; and his best original play, the tragedy *André* (1797), represented nearly ten years of study and revision of an American historical theme.

Some of the ablest writing of the late eighteenth century was in the form of letters. Though not intended for publication, some of these found their way into print, such as Franklin's essay-letters to Madame Brillouin on the whistle and the ephemera, which became models for later essays by Webster and Dennie. The informal letters of John and Abigail Adams, the multifarious correspondence of Jefferson, and the gossipy epistles of Catherine and Mary Byles are good examples of a literary type rarely cultivated today.

American literary criticism had its chief beginnings during this period in the newspaper and magazine comments of the rival editors C. B. Brown and Joseph Dennie, both of whom attempted to improve American literary standards. Brown was more partial to native productions while Dennie emphasized the superiority of the contemporary British writers and was the first to introduce Wordsworth appreciatively to American readers. Noah Webster, John Quincy Adams, and President John Witherspoon of Princeton, wrote extensively on standards of rhetoric and usage.

The prose essay, which had a good start in the earlier eighteenth century, was cultivated actively toward its close. Francis Hopkinson's essays were collected and published late in his life, and other noteworthy contributions were the "Philosopher of the Forest" and "Tomo Cheeki" papers of Freneau, Noah Webster's *The Prompter*, and Mrs. Judith Sargent Murray's *The Gleaner*. These were overshadowed in popularity by the grace, ease, and fluency of Joseph Dennie, whose *Farrago* and *Lay Preacher* series appeared first in Vermont and New Hampshire newspapers between 1792 and 1799 and were later reprinted in the *Port Folio*, at Philadelphia. Modeled upon the *Spectator* type with "an admixture of Goldsmith sweetness," they gained him a reputation as "the Addison of America" in his own time, though few of them retain their sparkle for modern readers. He was eclipsed as an essayist by Irving's *Salmagundi* in 1807 (to be discussed in the next period). Dennie's chief contribution to his generation was his ceaseless efforts to belabor it into a greater attention to its shortcomings and a return to the classical simplicity of earlier times.

## 1752 -- Philip Freneau -- 1832

**F**RENEAU, the earliest important American poet, illustrates in his work virtually all the characteristics of English pre-romantic poetry, and in some of his poems dealing with nature and primitive life is even a forerunner of Wordsworth.

He was born of Huguenot and Scottish stock, at New York, but after his tenth year his home was chiefly the family estate, Mount Pleasant, near Matawan, New Jersey, where his father, a successful shipowner, lived in plantation fashion. At Princeton, then "a hotbed of Whiggism," Freneau won praise for several poems of considerable promise, and also joined heartily with his classmates James Madison and Hugh Henry Brackenridge, and with Aaron Burr and other fellow students, in organizations opposed to British repressive measures. His commencement poem (with Brackenridge) in 1771, "The Rising Glory of America," hopefully expresses



these two interests. A third, after some experience in schoolteaching with Brackenridge and writing anti-British squibs for the New York papers, was supplied by a voyage to the West Indies and a two-year residence on the island of Santa Cruz. His "Beauties of Santa Cruz" and other poems of the period show how greatly the sea and the semi-tropical luxuriance of the islands had taken hold of his imagination.

Returning home by way of Bermuda in 1778, he apparently enlisted for service with Washington's army at Monmouth, contributed the Gothic "House of Night" and other Santa Cruz poems to Brackenridge's *United States Magazine*, and renewed his newspaper and broadside warfare with the hated British and Tories. This hatred was intensified by an imprisonment of two months in one of the prison hulks in New York harbor in the summer of 1780, when the American ship *Aurora*, on which he was sailing for the West Indies, was captured by the enemy. His satire, *The British Prison Ship*, published later in 1780, vigorously and realistically set forth the horrors and brutalities he underwent.

His first two collections of poems were published in 1786 and 1788, while he was at sea, on freighting voyages to Charleston and the West Indies. In 1790 he married Eleanor Forman and settled down at Mount Pleasant. In the following August he accepted from Jefferson, Secretary of State, an appointment as translator to the State Department. It was probably understood that he was to conduct an opposition newspaper to the Federalist party organ, the *Gazette of the United States*. Freneau's paper, the *National Gazette*, vigorously assailed the Federalist policies from October, 1791, to October, 1793. On account of this connection Freneau was bitterly censured by the Federalists, including Washington, but Jefferson credited him with having saved the Constitution when it was "galloping fast into monarchy." He resigned his post in October, 1793.

Between 1793 and 1803 he edited newspapers in New York and at home, still championing the Democrats and the revolutionists in France; published in 1795 his *Poems Written between the Years 1768 and 1794*; and made unsuccessful attempts at farming. From 1803 to 1807 he was again at sea, then came home to spend his last years in New Jersey. The War of 1812 again stirred his pen in the American cause. He also busied himself with two new editions of his poems in 1809 and 1815. The burning of his house and library at Mount Pleasant in the latter year rendered his family nearly destitute. They removed after a time to a farm near Freehold, left by one of Mrs. Freneau's brothers. Here the poet died, December 18, 1832, from the effects of exposure while returning from a tavern in a snowstorm at night.

Freneau's verse falls into two classes: patriotic and partisan songs, satires, and invectives; and imaginative lyrical, reflective, and descriptive poetry. In his time he was chiefly known for the former, which has the merits of vigor and spirit but is often hasty, ill-tempered, and incorrect. Of more permanent significance are the imaginative and romantic poems, which exhibit the late eighteenth-century themes

of nature, humanitarianism, melancholy, interest in the remote and the supernatural, primitivism, and solitude, and the religious influence at first of deism and later of Unitarianism. Nearly all of these show real poetic talent and genuine imagination; but the same restlessness and impatience of restraint which kept him from success in business affairs make them suffer from lack of self-discipline and pruning. He missed the criticism and friendly rivalry of fellow writers, and cried,

Thrice happy Dryden, who could meet  
Some rival bard in every street!  
When all were bent on writing well,  
It was some credit to excel.

His prose writings, though showing the same defects, have not received their due credit. While uneven in composition, his essays have the merits of pleasing sentiment, humor, candid appreciation of contemporary faults and follies, and occasional bits of apt characterization. In Tomo Cheeki, the Creek Indian commentator on the white man's life and customs, he barely falls short of creating a lasting character.

Freneau's early literary reputation suffered from his alignment with the Anti-federalists and Democrats, regarded as dangerous radicals by the Federalists, to whose ranks belonged most of the educated and leisured class who produced and encouraged letters and the arts; and he had later the misfortune to be surpassed in his own lifetime by Bryant, a far better poet, an experience not suffered by his fellow pioneers, the novelist Brown, the essayist Dennie, and the dramatist Dunlap, with whom he is to be ranked.

Editions of Freneau's works published in his lifetime, besides those named above, were: *Poems Written and Published during the American Revolutionary War* (2 vols., 1809), and *Poems on American Affairs* (2 vols., 1815). Recent collections are F. L. Pattee, *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (3 vols., 1902-07); H. H. Clark, *Poems of Freneau* (American Authors Series, 1929); L. F. Heartman, *Unpublished Freneauana* (1918). V. H. Paltsits issued a *Bibliography of Philip Freneau* in 1903. For biography, consult F. L. Pattee's introduction to the *Poems*, Vol. I, and the sketch in *DAB*; M. S. Austin, *Philip Freneau, the Poet of the Revolution* (1901); P. M. Marsh, "Philip Freneau and His Circle," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LXIII, 37-59 (Jan., 1939); and J. O. Grundy, "Philip Freneau, Jersey Patriot and Poet of the Revolution," *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, n.s. XIV, 481-488 (Oct., 1929).

For interpretation and criticism, see J. M. Beatty, "Churchill and Freneau," *American Literature*, II, 121-130 (May, 1930); R. Brenner, *Twelve American Poets before 1900* (1933), 3-22; H. H. Clark, "What Made Freneau the Father of American Poetry?" *Studies in Philology*, XXVI, 1-22 (Jan., 1929); "Literary Influences on Philip Freneau," *Studies in Philology*, XXII, 1-33 (1925); and "What Made Freneau the Father of American Prose," *Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters*, XXV, 39-50 (1930); E. F. DeLancey, "Philip Freneau, the Huguenot Patriot Poet of the Revolution," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of America*, II (1891); S. E. Forman, "The Political Activities of Philip Freneau," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in History and Political Science*, Ser. XX, No. 9-10 (1902); P. M. Marsh, "Was Freneau a Fighter?" *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, LVI, 211-218; V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents*

in *American Thought* (1907), I, 368-381; F. L. Pattee, *Sidelights on American Literature* (1922), 255-297; and "Philip Freneau as a Postal Clerk," *American Literature*, IV, 61-62 (March, 1932); Frank Smith, "Philip Freneau and *The Time-Piece and Literary Companion*," *American Literature*, IV, 270-287 (Nov., 1932); M. C. Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution*, I, 171-183, 413-423, and II, 245-276.

### THE POWER OF FANCY

This early poem, written while Freneau was still in college, sums up many of the characteristics of pre-romantic poetry: the influence of Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," which it parallels, love of nature, melancholy, fondness for distant scenes and remote times, contemplation of death and the tomb, praise of Ossian, and a suggestion of primitivism, mingled with a deistic definition of the universe.

WAKEFUL, vagrant, restless thing,  
Ever wandering on the wing,  
Who thy wondrous source can find,  
Fancy, regent of the mind;  
A spark from Jove's resplendent throne,  
But thy nature all unknown.

This spark of bright, celestial flame,  
From Jove's seraphic altar came,  
And hence alone in man we trace,  
Resemblance to the immortal race. 10

Ah! what is all this mighty whole,  
These suns and stars that round us roll!  
What are they all, where'er they shine,  
But Fancies of the Power Divine!  
What is this globe, these lands, and seas,  
And heat, and cold, and flowers, and trees,  
And life, and death, and beast, and man,  
And time—that with the sun began—  
But thoughts on reason's scale combin'd,  
Ideas of the Almighty mind? 20

On the surface of the brim  
Night after night she walks unseen;  
Noble fabrics doth she raise  
In the woods or on the seas,  
On some high, steep, pointed rock,  
Where the billows loudly knock  
And the dreary tempests sweep  
Clouds along the uncivil deep.

Lol she walks upon the moon,  
Listens to the chumy tune 30  
Of the bright, harmonious spheres,  
And the song of angels hears;  
Sees this earth a distant star,  
Pendant, floating in the air;  
Leads me to some lonely dome,

Where Religion loves to come,  
Where the bride of Jesus dwells,  
And the deep ton'd organ swells  
In notes with lofty anthems join'd,  
Notes that half distract the mind. 40

Now like lightning she descends  
To the prison of the fiends,  
Hears the rattling of their chains,  
Feels their never ceasing pains—  
But, O never may she tell  
Half the frightfulness of hell.

Now she views Arcadian rocks,  
Where the shepherds guard their flocks,  
And, while yet her wings she spreads,  
Sees crystal streams and coral beds, 50

Wanders to some desert deep,  
Or some dark, enchanted steep,  
By the full moon light doth shew  
Forests of a dusky blue,  
Where, upon some mossy bed,  
Innocence reclines her head

Swift, she stretches o'er the seas  
To the far off Hebrides,  
Canvass on the lofty mast  
Could not travel half so fast— 60

Swifter than the eagle's flight  
Or instantaneous rays of light!  
Lol contemplative she stands  
On Norwega's rocky lands—  
Fickle Goddess, set me down  
Where the rugged winters frown  
Upon Orca's howling steep,  
Nodding o'er the northern deep,  
Where the winds tumultuous roar,  
Vext that Ossian sings no more. 70

Fancy, to that land repair,  
Sweetest Ossian slumbers there,  
Waft me far to southern isles  
Where the soften'd winter smiles,  
To Bermuda's orange shades,  
Or Demarara's lovely glades;  
Bear me o'er the sounding cape,  
Painting death in every shape,  
Where daring Anson spread the sail  
Shatter'd by the stormy gale— 80

Lol she leads me wide and far,  
Sense can never follow her—  
Shape thy course o'er land and sea,  
Help me to keep pace with thee,  
Lead me to yon chalky cliff,  
Over rock and over reef,  
Into Britain's fertile land,  
Stretching far her proud command.  
Look back and view, thro' many a year,  
Caesar, Julius Caesar, there.

Now to Tempe's verdant wood,  
Over the mid ocean flood  
Lol the islands of the sea—  
Sappho, Lesbos mourns for thee.  
Greece, arouse thy humbled head,  
Where are all thy mighty dead,  
Who states to endless ruin hur'd  
And carried vengeance through the world?—  
Troy, thy vanish'd pomp resume,  
Or, weeping at thy Hector's tomb,  
Yet those faded scenes renew,  
Whose memory is to Homer due.  
Fancy, lead me wandering still  
Up to Ida's cloud-topp'd hill,  
Not a laurel there doth grow  
But in vision thou shalt show.  
Every sprig on Virgil's tomb  
Shall in livelier colors bloom,  
And every triumph Rome has seen  
Flourish on the years between.

Now she bears me far away  
In the east to meet the day,  
Leads me over Ganges' streams,  
Mother of the morning beams—  
O'er the ocean hath she run,  
Places me on Timan;  
Farther, farther in the east,  
Till it almost meets the west,  
Let us wandering both be lost  
On Tahiti's sea-beat coast,  
Bear me from that distant strand,  
Over ocean, over land,  
To California's golden shore—  
Fancy, stop, and rove no more.

Now, tho' late, returning home,  
Lead me to Belinda's tomb;  
Let me glide as well as you  
Through the shroud and coffin too,  
And behold, a moment, there,  
All that once was good and fair—  
Who doth here so soundly sleep?

Shall we break this prison deep?—  
Thunders cannot wake the maid,  
Lightnings cannot pierce the shade,  
And tho' wintry tempesta roar,  
Tempests shall disturb no more.

Yet must those eyes in darkness stay,  
That once were rivals to the day?  
Like heaven's bright lamp beneath the main  
They are but set to rise again.

Fancy, thou the muses' pride,  
In thy painted realms reside  
Endless images of things,  
Fluttering each on golden wings,  
Ideal objects, such a store,  
The universe could hold no more:  
Fancy, to thy power I owe  
Half my happiness below,  
By thee Elysian groves were made,  
Thine were the notes that Orpheus play'd,  
By thee was Pluto charm'd so well  
While rapture seiz'd the sons of hell—  
Come, O come—perceiv'd by none,  
You and I will walk alone.

1770

1786

### From THE BEAUTIES OF SANTA CRUZ

Freneau, though genuinely patriotic, was by instinct a man of peace and gladly spent the first years of the Revolution in the West Indies. His sensuous enjoyment of the exotic beauty of the Danish island of St. Croix anticipates the spirit of Shelley in this respect.

Sick of thy northern glooms, come, shepherd,  
seek

More equal climes, and a serener sky:  
Why shouldst thou toil amid thy frozen  
ground,

Where half-years' snows, a barren prospect, lie,  
When thou mayst go where never frost was  
seen,

Or north-west winds with cutting fury blow,  
Where never ice congealed the limpid stream,  
Where never mountain upt its head with  
snow?

Twice ten days prosperous gales thy barque  
shall bear

To isles that flourish in perpetual green,  
Where richest herbage glads each fertile vale,  
And ever verdant plants on every hill are seen.

130

Nor dread the dangers of the billowy deep,  
Autumnal winds shall safely waft thee o'er;  
Put off the timid heart, or, man unblessed,  
Ne'er shalt thou reach this gay enchanting shore.

Cool, woodland streams from shaded cliffs  
descend,  
The dripping rock no want of moisture  
knows,  
Supplied by springs that on the skies depend,  
That fountain feeding as the current flows. 20

Such were the isles which happy Flaccus sung,  
Where one tree blossoms while another bears,  
Where spring forever gay, and ever young,  
Walks her gay round through her unceasing years.

Such were the climes which youthful Eden  
saw  
Ere crossing fates destroyed her golden reign—  
Reflect upon thy loss, unhappy man,  
And seek the vales of Paradise again.

No lowering skies are here—the neighboring  
sun 29  
Clear and unveiled, his brilliant journey goes,  
Each morn emerging from the ambient main,  
And sinking there, each evening, to repose.

The native here, in golden plenty blest,  
Bids from the soil the verdant harvests spring,  
Feasts in the abundant dome, the joyous guest,  
Time short,—life easy,—pleasure on the wing.

The smooth white cedar here delights the  
eye,  
The bay-tree, with its aromatic green  
The sea-side grapes, sweet natives of the sand,  
And pulse, of various kinds, on trees are seen.

Here mingled vines their downward shadows  
cast, 41  
Here, clustered grapes from loaded boughs  
depend,  
Their leaves no frosts, their fruits no cold  
winds blast,  
But, reared by suns, to time alone they bend.

The plantane and banana flourish here,  
Of hasty growth, and love to fix their root  
Where some soft stream of ambling water  
flows,  
To yield full moisture to their clustered fruit.

No other trees so vast a leaf can boast,  
So broad, so long—through these, refreshed,  
we stray, 50  
And though the noon-sun all his radiance  
shed,  
These friendly leaves shall shade me all the  
way,

And tempt the cooling breeze to hasten there,  
With its sweet odorous breath to charm the  
grove;  
High shades and verdant seats, while under-  
neath  
A little stream by mossy banks doth rove,

Where once the Indian dames slept with their  
swains,  
Or fondly kissed the moonlight eves away;—  
The lovers fled, the tearful stream remains,  
And only I console it with my lay! 60

Among the shades of yonder whispering grove  
The green palmettos mangle, tall and fair,  
That ever murmur, and forever move,  
Fanning with wavy bough the ambient air.

O grant me, gods, if yet condemned to stray,  
At least to spend life's sober evening here,  
To plant a grove where winds yon sheltered  
bay,  
And pluck these fruits, that frost nor winter  
fear.

1776

1779

### From THE HOUSE OF NIGHT

#### A VISION

ADVERTISEMENT—This Poem is founded upon the authority of Scripture, inasmuch as these sacred books assert that *the last enemy that shall be conquered is Death*. For the purposes of poetry he is here personified, and represented as on his dying bed. The scene is laid at a solitary palace, (the time midnight) which, though before beautiful and joyous, is now become sad and gloomy, as being the abode and receptacle of Death. Its owner, an

amiable, majestic youth, who had lately lost a beloved consort, nevertheless with a noble philosophical fortitude and humanity, entertains him in a friendly manner, and by employing physicians, endeavors to restore him to health, although an enemy, convinced of the excellence and propriety of that divine precept, *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink* He nevertheless, as if by a spirit of prophecy, informs this (fictitiously) wicked being of the certainty of his doom, and represents to him in a pathetic manner the vanity of his expectations, either of a reception into the abodes of the just, or continuing longer to make havoc of mankind upon earth The patient finding his end approaching, composes his epitaph, and orders it to be engraved on his tombstone, hinting to us thereby, that even Death and Distress have vanity, and would be remembered with honor after he is no more, although his whole life has been spent in deeds of devastation and murder He dies at last in the utmost agonies of despair, after agreeing with the avaricious undertaker to entomb his bones This reflects upon the inhumanity of those men, who, not to mention an enemy, would scarcely cover a departed friend with a little dust without the certainty of a reward for so doing The circumstances of his funeral are then recited, and the visionary and fabulous part of the poem disappears. It concludes with a few reflections on the impropriety of a too great attachment to the present life, and incentives to such moral virtue as may assist in conducting us to a better

1

TREMBLING I write my dream, and recollect  
A fearful vision at the midnight hour;  
So late, Death o'er me spread his sable wings,  
Painted with fancies of malignant power!

2

Such was the dream the sage Chaldean saw  
Disclos'd to him that felt heav'n's vengeful  
rod,  
Such was the ghost, who through deep silence  
cried,  
Shall mortal man—be juster than his God.

3

Let others draw from smiling skies their  
theme,  
And tell of climes that boast unfading light,  
I draw a darker scene, replete with gloom, 11  
I sing the horrors of the House of Night.

4

Stranger, believe the truth experience tells,  
Poetic dreams are of a finer cast  
Than those which o'er the sober brain diffus'd,  
Are but a repetition of some action past.

5

Fancy, I own thy power—when sunk in sleep  
Thou play'st thy wild delusive part so well  
You lift me into immortality,  
Deplete new heavens, or draw scenes of hell.

6

By some sad means, when Reason holds no  
sway, 21  
Lonely I rovd at midnight o'er a plain  
Where murmuring streams and mingling  
rivers flow,  
Far to their springs, or seek the sea again.

7

Sweet vernal May! though then thy woods in  
bloom  
Flourish'd, yet nought of this could Fancy see,  
No wild pink bloss'd the meads, no green the  
fields,  
And naked seem'd to stand each lifeless tree:

8

Dark was the sky, and not one friendly star  
Shone from the zenith or horizon, clear, 30  
Mist sat upon the woods, and darkness rode  
In her black chariot, with a wild career.

9

And from the woods the late resounding note  
Issued of the loquacious Whip-poor-will,  
Hoarse, howling dogs, and nightly roving  
wolves  
Clamor'd from far off cliffs invisible.

10

Rude, from the wide extended Chesapeake  
I heard the winds the dashing waves assail,  
And saw from far, by pictures fancy form'd,  
The black ship travelling through the noisy  
gale. 40

11

At last, by chance and guardian fancy led,  
I reach'd a noble dome, rais'd fair and high,  
And saw the light from upper windows flame,  
Presage of mirth and hospitality.

12

And by that light around the dome appear'd  
A mournful garden of autumnal hue,  
Its lately pleasing flowers all drooping stood  
Amidst high weeds that in rank plenty grew.

13

The primrose there, the violet darkly blue,  
Daisies and fair narcissus ceas'd to rise, 50  
Gay spotted pinks their charming bloom with-  
drew,  
And polyanthus quench'd its thousand dyes.

14

No pleasant fruit or blossom gaily smil'd.  
Nought but unhappy plants and trees were  
seen,  
The yew, the myrtle, and the church-yard elm,  
The cypress, with its melancholy green

15

There cedars dark, the osier, and the pine,  
Shorn tamarisks, and weeping willows grew,  
The poplar tall, the loto, and the lime,  
And pyracantha did her leaves renew 60

16

The poppy there, companion to repose,  
Display'd her blossoms that began to fall,  
And here the purple amaranthus rose  
With mint strong-scented, for the funeral.

17

And here and there with laurel shrubs be-  
tween  
A tombstone lay, inscrib'd with strains of woe,  
And stanzas sad, throughout the dismal green,  
Lamented for the dead that slept below.

18

Peace to this awful dome!—when straight I  
heard  
The voice of men in a secluded room, 70  
Much did they talk of death, and much of life,  
Of coffins, shrouds, and horrors of a tomb. . .

23

Then up three winding stairs my feet were  
brought  
To a high chamber, hush'd with mourning sad,  
The unquench'd candles glaz'd with venge dim,  
Midst grief, its ecstasy of woe ran mad.

24

A wide leaf'd table stood on either side,  
Well fraught with phials, half their liquids  
spent,  
And from a couch, behind the curtain's veil,  
I heard a hollow voice of loud lament. 80

25

Turning to view the object whence it came,  
My frighted eyes a horrid form survey'd,  
Fancy, I own thy power!—Death on the couch,  
With fleshless limbs, at rueful length, was laid.

26

And o'er his head flew jealousies and cares,  
Ghosts, imps, and half the black Tartarian  
crew,  
Arch-angels damn'd, nor was their Prince  
remote,  
Borne on the vaporous wings of Strygian dew.

27

Around his bed, by the dull flambeaux' glare,  
I saw pale phantoms!—Rage to madness vent,  
Wan, wasting Grief, and ever musing Care, 91  
Distressful Pain, and Poverty perplex.

28

Sad was his countenance, if we can call  
That countenance, where only bones were  
seen  
And eyes sunk in their sockets, dark and  
low,  
And teeth, that only show'd themselves to  
grim

29

Reft was his skull of hair, and no fresh bloom  
Of cheerful mirth sate on his visage hoar  
Sometimes he rais'd his head, while deep-  
drawn groans  
Were mixt with words that did his fate de-  
plore. 100

30

Oft did he wish to see the daydawn spring,  
And often toward the window lean'd to  
hear,  
Fore-runner of the sootiest-mantled morn,  
The early note of wailing Chanicleur.

31

Thus he—But at my hand a portly youth  
Of comely countenance, began to tell,  
That this was Death upon his dying bed,  
Sullen, morose, and peevish to be well.

32

"Fixt is his doom—the miscreant reigns no  
more

The tyrant of the dying or the dead; 110  
This night concludes his all-consuming reign,  
Pour out, ye heav'ns, your vengeance on his  
head.

33

"But since, my friend (said he), chance leads  
you here,  
With me this night upon the sick attend,  
You on this bed of death must watch, and I  
Will not be distant from the fretful fiend.

34

"Before he made this lofty pile his home,  
In undisturb'd repose I sweetly slept,  
But when he came to this sequester'd dome  
'Twas then my troubles came, and then I wept:

35

"Twice three long nights, in this sad chamber,  
I, 121  
As though a brother languish'd in despair,  
Have tended faithful round his gloomy bed,  
Have been content to breathe this loathsome  
air.

36

"A while relieve the languors that I feel,  
Sleep's magic forces close my weary eyes;  
Soft o'er my soul unwonted slumbers steal,  
And the weak patient till you see me rise.

37

"But let no slumbers on your eye-lids fall,  
That if he ask for powder or for pill 130  
You may be ready at the word to start,  
And still seem anxious to perform his will.

38

"The bleeding Saviour of a world undone  
Bade thy compassion rise toward thy foe;  
Then, stranger, for the sake of Mary's son,  
Thy tears of pity on this wretch bestow." . . .

46

So said, at Death's left side I sat me down,  
The mourning youth toward his right re-  
clin'd;  
Death in the middle lay, with all his groans,  
And much he toss'd and tumbled, sigh'd and  
pin'd. 140

47

But now this man of hell toward me turn'd,  
And straight, in hideous tone, began to speak,  
Long held he sage discourse, but I forebore  
To answer him, much less his news to seek.

48

He talk'd of tomb-stones and of monuments,  
Of equinoxial climes and India shores,  
He talk'd of stars that shed their influence,  
Fevers and plagues, and all their noxious  
stores.

49

He mention'd, too, the guleful *calenture*,<sup>1</sup>  
Tempting the sailor on the deep sea main, 150  
That paints gay groves upon the ocean floor,  
Beckoning her victim to the faithless scene.

50

Much spoke he of the myrtle and the yew,  
Of ghosts that nightly walk the church-yard  
o'er,  
Of storms that through the win't'ry ocean blow  
And dash the well-mann'd galley on the shore,

51

Of broad-mouth'd cannon, and the thunder-  
bolt,  
Of sieges and convulsions, dearth and fire,  
Of poisonous weeds—but seem'd to sneer at  
these  
Who by the laurel o'er him did aspire. 160

52

Then with a hollow voice thus went he on,  
"Get up, and search, and bring, when found,  
to me,  
Some cordial, potion, or some pleasant  
draught,  
Sweet, numb'rous poppy, or the mild Dohea.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> fever, accompanied by delirium      <sup>2</sup> tea



53

"But hark, my pitying friend!—and, if you  
can,  
Deceive the grim physician at the door—  
Bring half the mountain springs—ah! hither  
bring  
The cold rock water from the shady bower.

54

"For till this night such thirst did ne'er in-  
vade,  
A thirst provok'd by heav'n's avenging hand;  
Hence bear me, friends, to quaff, and quaff  
again 171  
The cool wave bubbling from the yellow sand.

55

"To these dark walls with stately step I  
came,  
Prepar'd your drugs and doses to defy;  
Smit with the love of never dying fame,  
I came, alas! to conquer—not to die!" . . .

103

Scarce had he spoke, when on the lofty dome  
Rush'd from the clouds a hoarse resounding  
blast— 178  
Round the four eaves so loud and sad it play'd  
As though all music were to breathe its last.

104

Warm was the gale, and such as travellers say  
Sport with the winds on Zazara's waste;  
Black was the sky, a mourning carpet spread,  
Its azure blotted, and its stars o'ercast

105

Lights in the air like burning stars were hurl'd,  
Dogs howl'd, heaven mutter'd, and the tem-  
pest blew,  
The red half-moon speeded from behind a  
cloud  
As if in dread the amazing scene to view.

106

The mournful trees that in the garden stood  
Bent to the tempest as it rush'd along, 190  
The elm, the myrtle, and the cypress sad  
Mose melancholy run'd its bellowing song.

107

No more that elm its noble branches spread,  
The yew, the cypress, or the myrtle tree,  
Rent from the roots the tempest tore them  
down,  
And all the grove in wild confusion lay.

108

Yet, mindful of his dread command, I part  
Glad from the magic dome—nor found re-  
lief;  
Damps from the dead hung heavier round my  
heart,  
While sad remembrance rous'd her stores of  
grief. 200

109

O'er a dark field I held my dubious way  
Where Jack-a-lantern walk'd his lonely  
round,  
Beneath my feet substantial darkness lay,  
And screams were heard from the distemper'd  
ground.

110

Nor look'd I back, till to a far-off wood  
Trembling with fear, my weary feet had  
sped—  
Dark was the night, but at the enchanted dome  
I saw the infernal windows flaming red.

111

And from within the howls of Death I heard,  
Curse the dismal night that gave him birth,  
Damning his ancient sire, and mother sin, 211  
Who at the gates of hell, accurs'd, brought  
him forth.

112

(For fancy gave to my enraptur'd soul  
An eagle's eye, with keenest glance to see,  
And bade those distant sounds distinctly  
roll,  
Which, waking, never had affected me.)

113

Of his pale breast with cruel hand he smote,  
And tearing from his limbs a winding sheet,  
Roar'd to the black skies, while the woods  
around,  
As wicked as himself, his words repeat, 220

114

Thrice tow'rd the skies his meagre arms he  
rear'd,  
Invok'd all hell, and thunders on his head,  
Bid light'nings fly, earth yawn, and tempests  
roar,  
And the sea wrap him in its oozy bed.

115

"My life for one cool draught!—O, fetch  
your springs,  
Can one unfeeling to my woes be found!  
No friendly visage comes to my relief,  
But ghosts impend, and spectres hover round.

116

"Though humbled now, dishearten'd and  
distrest, 229  
Yet, when admitted to the peaceful ground,  
With heroes, kings, and conquerors I shall rest,  
Shall sleep as safely, and perhaps as sound."

117

Dun burnt the lamp, and now the phantom  
Death  
Gave his last groans in horror and despair—  
"All hell demands me hence,"—he said, and  
threw  
The red lamp hissing through the midnight air.

118

Trembling, across the plain my course I held,  
And found the grave-yard, loitering through  
the gloom,  
And, in the midst, a hell-red, wandering light,  
Walking in fiery circles round the tomb. 240

119

Among the graves a spiry building stood,  
Whose tolling bell, resounding through the  
shade,  
Sung doleful ditties to the adjacent wood,  
And many a dismal drowsy thing it said.

120

This fabric tall, with towers and chancels grac'd,  
Was rais'd by sinners' hands, in ages fled;  
The roof they painted, and the beams they  
brac'd,  
*And texts from scripture o'er the walls they  
spread:*

121

But wicked were their hearts, for they refus'd  
To aid the helpless orphan, when distrest, 250  
The shivering, naked stranger they misus'd,  
And banish'd from their doors the starving  
guest.

122

By laws protected, cruel and profane,  
The poor man's ox these monsters drove  
away;—  
And left Distress to attend her infant train,  
No friend to comfort, and no bread to stay.

123

But heaven look'd on with keen, resentful  
eye,  
And doom'd them to perdition and the grave,  
That as they felt not for the wretch distrest,  
So heaven no pity on their souls would have.

124

In pride they rais'd this building tall and fair,  
Their hearts were on perpetual mischief bent,  
With pride they preach'd, and pride was in  
their prayer, 263  
With pride they were deceiv'd, and so to hell  
they went

125

At distance far approaching to the tomb,  
By lamps and lanthorns guided through the  
shade,  
A coal-black chariot hurried through the  
gloom,  
Spectres attending, in black weeds array'd,

126

Whose woeful forms yet chill my soul with  
dread,  
Each wore a vest in Stygian chambers wove,  
Death's kindred all—Death's horses they be-  
strode, 271  
And gallop'd fiercely, as the chariot drove.

127

Each horrid face a grisly mask conceal'd,  
Their busy eyes shot terror to my soul  
*As now and then, by the pale lanthorn's glare,  
I saw them for their parted friend condole.*

-128

Before the harse Death's chaplain seem'd to  
go,  
Who strove to comfort, what he could, the  
dead;  
Talk'd much of Satan, and the land of woe,  
And many a chapter from the scriptures read.

129

At last he rais'd the swelling anthem high, as  
In dismal numbers seem'd he to complain;  
The captive tribes that by Euphrates wept,  
Their song was jovial to his dreary strain.

130

That done, they plac'd the carcass in the tomb,  
To dust and dull oblivion now resign'd,  
Then turn'd the chariot tow'rd the House of  
Night,  
Which soon flew off, and left no trace behind.

131

But as I stoop'd to write the appointed verse,  
Swifter than thought the airy scene decay'd;  
Brushing the morn arose, and from the east  
With her gay streams of light dispell'd the  
shade

292

132

What is this Death, ye deep read sophists,  
say?—  
Death is no more than one unceasing change,  
New forms arise, while other forms decay,  
Yet all is Life throughout creation's range.

133

The towering Alps, the haughty Apennine,  
The Andes, wrapt in everlasting snow,  
The Appalachian and the Ararat  
Sooner or later must to ruin go.

300

134

Hills sink to plains, and man returns to dust,  
That dust supports a reptile or a flower;  
Each changeful atom by some other nurs'd  
Takes some new form, to perish in an hour.

135

Too nearly join'd to sickness, tolls, and pains,  
(Perhaps for former crimes imprison'd here)  
True to itself the immortal soul remains,  
And seeks new mansions in the stary sphere.

136

When Nature bids thee from the world retire,  
With joy thy lodging leave, a fated guest; 310  
In Paradise, the land of thy desire,  
Existing always, always to be blest.<sup>1</sup>

1779, 1786

### TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE AMERICANS

UNDER GENERAL GREENE, IN SOUTH CARO-  
LINA, WHO FELL IN THE ACTION OF  
SEPTEMBER 8, 1781

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;  
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—  
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide,  
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they  
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,  
O smite your gentle breast, and say  
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,  
If goodness rules thy generous breast, 10  
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;  
Sigh for the shepherds, sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;  
You too may fall, and ask a tear;  
'Tis not the beauty of the morn  
That proves the evening shall be clear.—

They saw their injured country's woe;  
The flaming town, the wasted field,  
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe,  
They took the spear—but left the shield. 20

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,  
The Britons they compelled to fly;  
None distant viewed the fatal plain,  
None grieved, in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthian, famed of old,  
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,  
These routed Britons, full as bold,  
Retreated, and retreating slew.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the closing lines of Bryant's "Thanatopsis."

Now rest in peace, our patriot band;  
Though far from nature's limits thrown, 90  
We trust they find a happier land,  
A brighter sunshine of their own.

1781

# TO SIR TOBY

## A SUGAR PLANTER IN THE INTERIOR PARTS OF JAMAICA

Until after the Revolution, descriptions of the horrors of slavery in American literature are mainly confined to the West Indies, where Freneau's delight in exotic nature was marred with spectacles like those described in this poem

If there exists a hell—the case is clear—  
Sir Toby's slaves enjoy that portion here:  
Here are no blazing brimstone lakes, 'tis true;  
But kuddled rum too often burns as blue,  
In which some fiend, whom nature must  
detest,  
Steeps Toby's brand and marks poor Cudjoe's  
breast.

Here whips on whips excite perpetual fears,  
And mingled howlings vibrate on my ears;  
Here nature's plagues abound, to fret and  
tease,

Snakes, scorpions, despots, lizards, centipedes.  
No art, no care escapes the busy lash; 11  
All have their ducs—and all are paid in cash.  
The eternal driver keeps a steady eye  
On a black herd who would' his vengeance  
fly,

But chained, imprisoned, on a burning soil,  
For the mean avarice of a tyrant, toil  
The lengthy cart-whip guards this monster's  
reign,  
And cracks, like pistols, from the fields of  
cane.

Ye powers who formed these wretched  
tribes, relate,  
What had they done, to merit such a fate! 20  
Why were they brought from Eboe's sultry  
waste,  
To see that plenty which they must not taste—  
Food, which they cannot buy, and dare not  
steal,  
Yams and potatoes—many a scanty meal—

One with a gibbet wakes his negro's fears,  
One to the windmill nails him by the ears;

One keeps his slave in darkened dens, unfed,  
One puts the wretch in pickle ere he's dead:  
Thus, from a tree suspend him by the thumbs,  
That, from his table grudges even the crumb!  
O'er yond' rough hills a tribe of females go,  
Each with her gourd, her infant, and her hoe;  
Scorched by a sun that has no mercy here, 33  
Driven by a 'devil, whom men call overseer.  
In chains, twelve wretches to their labors  
haste;

Twice twelve I saw, with iron collars graced!—  
Are such the fruits that spring from vast  
domains?

Is wealth, thus got, Sir Toby, worth your  
pains!—

Who would your wealth on terms like these  
possess,

Where all we see is pregnant with distress—  
Angola's natives scourged by ruffian hands, 41  
And toil's hard product shipp'd to foreign  
lands?

Talk not of blossoms and your endless  
spring.

What joy, what smile, can scenes of misery  
bring?

Though Nature here has every blessing  
spread,

Poor is the laborer—and how meanly fed!—  
Here Stygian paintings light and shade  
renew,

Pictures of hell, that Virgil's pencil drew;  
Here, surly Charons make their annual trip,  
And ghosts arrive in every Guinea ship, 50  
To find what beasts these western isles afford,  
Plutonian scourges, and despotic lords:—

Here they, of stuff determined to be free,  
Must climb the rude cliffs of the Luguanee;  
Beyond the clouds, in skulking haste repair,  
And hardly safe from brother traitors there.

1784

1792

# THE HURRICANE<sup>1</sup>

HAPPY the man who, safe on shore,  
Now trims, at home, his evening fire;  
Unmoved, he hears the tempests roar,  
That on the tufted groves expire:  
Alas! on us they doubly fall,  
Our feeble barque must bear them all.

<sup>1</sup> Near the east end of Jamaica, July 30, 1784.  
[Freneau's note.]

Now so their haunts the birds retreat,  
The squirrel seeks his hollow seat,  
Wolves in their shaded caverns meet,  
All, all are blest but wretched we—  
Fare doomed a stranger to repose,  
No row the unscathed ocean knows.

While o'er the dark abyss we roam,  
Perhaps, with last departing gleam,  
We saw the sun descend in gloom,  
No more to see his morning beam;  
But buried low, by far too deep,  
On coral beds, unstirred, sleep!

But what a strange, uncoasted strand  
Is that, where fate permits no day—  
No charts have we to mark that land,  
No compass to direct that way—  
What pilot shall explore that realm,  
What new Columbus take the helm!

While death and darkness both surround,  
And tempests rage with lawless power,  
Of friendship's voice I hear no sound,  
No comfort in this dreadful hour—  
What friendship can in tempests be,  
What comforts on this raging sea?

The barque, accustomed to obey,  
No more the trembling pilots guide:  
Alone she gropes her trackless way,  
While mountains burst on either side—  
Thus, skill and science both must fall;  
And ruin is the lot of all.

1784

1785

### THE WILD HONEY SUCKLE

This poem invites comparison, in form and spirit, with Burns's "To a Mountain Daisy," written in 1786

FAIR flower, that dost so comely grow,  
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,  
Untouched thy homed blossoms blow,  
Unseen thy little branches greet:  
No roving foot shall crush thee here,  
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in whiten arrayed,  
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,  
And planted here the guardian shade,  
And sent soft waters murmuring by;

30

Thus quietly thy summer goes,  
Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,  
I grieve to see your future doom;  
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,  
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;  
Unpitied frosts, and Autumn's power  
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews  
At first thy little being came: 20  
If nothing once, you nothing lose,  
For when you die you are the same;  
The space between, is but an hour,  
The frail duration of a flower.

1786

### THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all the learned have said,  
I still my old opinion keep,  
The posture that we give the dead  
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—  
The Indian, when from life released,  
Again is seared with his friends,  
And shares again the joyous feast.<sup>1</sup>

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,  
And venison, for a journey dressed, 10  
Bespeak the nature of the soul,  
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,  
And arrows, with a head of stone,  
Can only mean that life is spent,  
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,  
No fraud upon the dead commit—  
Observe the swelling turf, and say  
They do not lie, but here they sit. 20

Here still a lofty rock remains,  
On which the curious eye may trace  
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)  
The fancies of a ruder race.

<sup>1</sup> The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture, decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, etc., and (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks, and other military weapons. [Fletcher's note.]

Here still an aged elm aspires,  
Beneath whose far-projecting shade  
(And which the shepherd still admires)  
The children of the forest played!

There oft a restless Indian queen  
(Pale Shebah, with her braided hair) 30  
And many a barbarous form is seen  
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dew,  
In habit for the chase arrayed,  
The hunter still the deer pursues,  
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see  
The painted chief, and pointed spear,  
And Reason's self shall bow the knee  
To shadows and delusions here. 40

1788

# TO AN AUTHOR

Your leaves bound up compact and fair,  
In neat array at length prepare,  
To pass their hour on learning's stage,  
To meet the surly critic's rage;  
The statesman's slight, the smatterer's sneer—  
Were these, indeed, your only fear,  
You might be tranquil and resigned.  
What most should touch your fluttering mind  
Is that few critics will be found  
To sift your works, and deal the wound. 10

Thus, when one fleeting year is past  
On some bye-shelf your book is cast—  
Another comes, with something new,  
And drives you fairly out of view:

With some to praise, but more to blame,  
The mind returns to—whence it came;  
And some alive, who scarce could read  
Will publish satires on the dead.

Thrice happy Dryden, who could meet  
Some rival bard in every street! 20  
When all were bent on writing well  
It was some credit to excel!—

Thrice happy Dryden, who could find  
A Milbourne for his sport designed—  
And Pope, who saw the harmless rage  
Of Dennis bursting o'er his page

Might justly span the critic's aim,  
Who only helped to swell his fame.

On these bleak climes by Fortune thrown,  
Where rigid Reason reigns alone, 30  
Where lovely Fancy has no sway,  
Nor magic forms about us play—  
Nor nature takes her summer hue  
Tell me, what has the muse to do?

An age employed in edging steel  
Can no poetic raptures feel;  
No solitude's attracting power,  
No leisure of the noon day hour,  
No shaded stream, no quiet grove  
Can this fantastic century move, 40

The muse of love in no request—  
Go—try your fortune with the rest,  
One of the nine you should engage,  
To meet the follies of the age!—

On one, we fear, your choice must fall—  
The least engaging of them all—  
Her visage stern—an angry style—  
A clouded brow—malicious smile—  
A mind on murdered victims placed—  
She, only she, can please the taste! 50

1788

# ON THE ANNIVERSARY

OF THE STORMING OF THE BASTILLE, AT  
PARIS, JULY 14TH, 1789

THE chiefs that bow to Capet's reign,  
In mourning, now, their weeds display:  
But we, that scorn a monarch's chain,  
Combine to celebrate the day  
To Freedom's birth that put the seal,  
And laid in dust the proud Bastille.

To Gallia's rich and splendid crown,  
Thus mighty day gave such a blow  
As Time's recording hand shall own  
No former age had power to do: 10  
No single gem some Brutus stole,  
But instant ruin seiz'd the whole.

Now tyrants rise, once more to bind  
In royal chains a nation freed—  
Vain hope! for they, to death consign'd,  
Shall soon, like perjur'd Louis, bleed:  
O'er every king, o'er every queen  
Fate hangs the sword and guillotine.

"Plunged in a gulf of deep distress  
France turns her back"—so traitors say. 20  
Kings, priests, and nobles round her press,  
Resolv'd to seize their destin'd prey.

Thus Europe swears, in arms combin'd,  
"To Poland's doom is France consign'd."

Yet those who now are thought so low  
From conquests that were basely gain'd,  
Shall rise tremendous from the blow  
And free two worlds, that still are chain'd,  
Restrict the Briton to his isle,  
And freedom plant in every soil. 30

Ye sons of this degenerate clime,<sup>1</sup>  
Haste, arm the barque, expand the sail;  
Assist to speed that golden time  
When Freedom rules, and monarchs fail;  
All left to France—new powers may join  
And help to crush the cause divine.

Ah! while I write, dear France Alhed,  
My ardent wish I scarce restrain,  
To throw these Sybil leaves aside,  
And fly to join you on the main: 40  
Unfurl the topsail for the chase  
And help to crush the tyrant race!

1793

## ODE 2

No poem, perhaps, better portrays the zeal with  
which many Americans after the Revolution pro-  
claimed their mission to make the entire world  
equally free. It greatly resembled that of the  
French after their revolution of 1789 and the  
Russians after theirs in 1917

God save the Rights of Man!  
Give us a heart to scan  
Blessings so dear.  
Let them be spread around  
Wherever man is found,  
And with the welcome sound  
Ravish his ear.

Let us with France agree,  
And bid the world be free,  
While tyrants fall! 10

<sup>1</sup> a protest against Washington's neutrality policy,  
disregarding the defensive alliance between the United  
States and France <sup>2</sup> sung to the tune of "God Save  
the King" (hence also of "America")

Let the rude savage host  
Of their vast numbers boast—  
Freedom's almighty trust  
Laughs at them all!

Though hosts of slaves conspire  
To quench fair Galla's fire,  
Still shall they fail:  
Though traitors round her rise,  
Leagued with her enemies,  
To war each patriot flies, 20  
And will prevail.

No more is valor's flame  
Devoted to a name,  
Taught to adore—  
Soldiers of Liberty  
Disdain to bow the knee,  
But teach equality  
To every shore.

The world at last will join  
To aid thy grand design, 30  
Dear Liberty!  
To Russia's frozen lands  
The generous flame expands:  
On Afric's burning sands  
Shall man be free!

In this our western world  
Be Freedom's flag unfurl'd  
Through all its shores!  
May no destructive blast  
Our heaven of joy o'ercast, 40  
May Freedom's fabric last  
While time endures.

If e'er her cause require!—  
Should tyrants e'er aspire  
To aim their stroke,  
May no proud despot daunt—  
Should he his standard plant,  
Freedom will never want  
Her hearts of oak!

1793

1795

## STANZAS

OCCASIONED BY CERTAIN ABSURD, EXTRAVAGANT,  
and even blasphemous panegyrics and enco-  
miums on the character of the late Gen. Wash-

ington, that appeared in several pamphlets, journals, and other periodical publications, in January, 1800.

No tongue can tell, no pen describe  
The frenzy of a numerous tribe,  
Who, by distemper'd fancy led,  
Insult the memory of the dead.  
Of old, there were in every age  
Who stuff'd with gods the historian's page,  
And raised beyond the human sphere  
Some who, we know, were mortal here

Such was the case, we know full well  
When darkness spread her pagan spell, 10  
Mere insects, born for tombs and graves,  
They changed into celestial knaves,  
Made some, condemn'd to tombs and shrouds,  
Lieutenant generals in the clouds.

In journals meant to spread the news  
From state to state—and we know whose—  
We read a thousand idle things  
That madness pens, or folly sings.

Was, Washington, your conquering sword  
Condemn'd to such a base reward? 20  
Was trash, like that we now review,  
The tribute to your valor due?

One holds you *more than mortal kind*,  
One holds you *all ethereal mind*,  
This puts you in your Saviour's seat,  
That makes you *dreadful in retreat*

One says *you are become a star*,  
One makes you *more resplendent, far*,  
One sings, that, when to death you bow'd,  
Old mother nature *shriek'd aloud* 30

We grieve to see such pens profane  
The first of chiefs, the first of men —  
To Washington—a man, who died—  
Is *abba, father* well applied?

Absurdly, in a frantic strain,  
Why ask him not for *sun and rain*?—  
We sicken at the vile applause  
That bids him *give the ocean laws*.

Ye patrons of the ranting strain,  
What *temples have been rent in twain*? 40  
What fiery chariots have been sent  
To dignify the sad event?—

O ye profane, irreverent few,  
Who reason's medium never knew,  
On you she never glanced her beams;  
You carry all things to extremes.

Shall they who spring from parent earth  
Pretend to more than mortal birth?  
Or, to the omnipotent allied,  
Control his heaven, or join his side? 50

Or is there not some chosen curse,  
Some vengeance due, with lightning's force,  
That far and wide destruction spreads,  
To burst on such irreverent heads!

Had they, in life, be-praised him so,  
What would have been the event I know  
He would have spurn'd them, with disdain,  
Or rush'd upon them with his cane.

He was no god, ye flattering knaves,  
He *own'd no world, he ruled no waves*, 60  
But—and exalt it, if you can,  
He was the upright, *honest man*.

This was his glory, this outshone  
Those attributes you dote upon.  
On this strong ground he took his stand;  
Such virtue saved a sinking land  
1800 1815

# ON A HONEY BEE

DRINKING FROM A GLASS OF WINE AND  
DROWNED THEREIN

Thou, born to sip the lake or spring,  
Or quaff the waters of the stream,  
Why hither come, on vagrant wing?  
Does Bacchus tempting seem,  
Did he for you this glass prepare?  
Will I admit you to a share?

Did storms harass or foes perplex,  
Did wasps or king-birds bring dismay,  
Did wars distress, or labors vex,  
Or did you miss your way? 10  
A better seat you could not take  
Than on the margin of this lake.

Welcome!—I hail you to my glass:  
All welcome here you find;  
Here let the cloud of trouble pass,  
Here be all care resigned.  
This fluid never fails to please,  
And drown the griefs of men or bees.



What forced you here we cannot know,  
 And you will scarcely tell,— 20  
 But cheery we would have you go  
 And bid a glad farewell:  
 On lighter wings we bid you fly,—  
 Your dart will now all foes defy.

Yet take not, oh! too deep a drink,  
 And in this ocean die,  
 Here bigger bees than you might sink,  
 Even bees full six feet high.  
 Like Pharaoh, then, you would be said  
 To perish in a sea of red. 30

Do as you please, your will is mine;  
 Enjoy it without fear,  
 And your grave will be this glass of wine,  
 Your epitaph—a tear;  
 Go, take your seat in Charon's boat,  
 We'll tell the hive, you died afloat. 1809

#### TO A CATY-DID

In a branch of willow bud  
 Sings the evening Caty-did.  
 From the lofty locust bough  
 Feeding on a drop of dew,  
 In her suit of green arrayed  
 Hear her singing in the shade  
 Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

While upon a leaf you tread,  
 Or repose your little head,  
 On your sheet of shadows laid, 10  
 All the day you nothing said:  
 Half the night your cheery tongue  
 Reveled out its little song,  
 Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodgings on the leaf  
 Did you utter joy or grief?—  
 Did you only mean to say,  
 I have had my summer's day,  
 And am passing, soon, away  
 To the grave of Caty-did:—  
 Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

But you would have uttered more  
 Had you known of nature's power—  
 From the world when you retreat,  
 And a leaf's your winding sheet,

Long before your spirit fled,  
 Who can tell but nature said,  
 Live again, my Caty-did!  
 Live and chatter, Caty-did.  
 Tell me, what did Caty do? 30  
 Did she mean to trouble you?  
 Why was Caty not forbid  
 To trouble little Caty-did?  
 Wrong indeed at you to fling,  
 Hurting no one while you sing  
 Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

Why continue to complain?  
 Caty tells me, she again  
 Will not give you plague or pain—  
 Caty says you may-be hid 40  
 Caty will not go to bed  
 While you sing us Caty-did  
 Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But while singing, you forgot  
 To tell us what did Caty not:  
 Caty did not think of cold,  
 Flocks returning to the fold,  
 Winter, with his wrinkles old,  
 Winter, that yourself foretold  
 When you gave us Caty-did 50

Stay securely in your nest,  
 Caty now will do her best,  
 All she can to make you blest,  
 But, you want no human aid—  
 Nature, when she formed you, said,  
 "Independent you are made,  
 My dear little Caty-did:  
 Soon yourself must disappear  
 With the verdure of the year,—"  
 And to go, we know not where, 60  
 With your song of Caty-did.

1815

#### ON THE UNIFORMITY AND PERFECTION OF NATURE

This poem and the following, together with another entitled "On a Book Called *Unitarian Theology*" (1786), show Freneau's acceptance of contemporary deistic and Unitarian religious views. In this he flouts the idea that in response to man's petitions, eternal natural laws may be interrupted in their normal course.

On one fix'd point all nature moves,  
 Nor deviates from the track she loves;

Her system, drawn from reason's source,  
She scorns to change her wonted course

Could she descend from that great plan  
To work unusual things for man,  
To suit the insect of an hour—  
Thus would betray a want of power,

Unsettled in its first design  
And erring, when it did combine 10  
The parts that form the vast machine,  
The figures sketch'd on nature's scene

Perfections of the great first cause  
Submit to no contracted laws,  
But all-sufficient, all-supreme,  
Include no trivial views in them

Who looks through nature with an eye  
That would the scheme of heaven descry,  
Observes her constant, still the same,  
In all her laws, through all her frame 20

No imperfection can be found  
In all that is, above, around,—  
All, nature made, in reason's sight  
Is order all and all is right 1815

#### ON THE RELIGION OF NATURE

THE power that gives with liberal hand  
The blessings man enjoys, while here,  
And scatters through a smiling land  
The abundant products of the year,

That power of nature, ever bless'd,  
Bestow'd religion with the rest

Born with ourselves, her early sway  
Inclines the tender mind to take  
The path of right, fair virtue's way  
Its own felicity to make 10  
Thus universally extends  
And leads to no mysterious ends.

Religion, such as nature taught,  
With all divine perfection suits,  
Had all mankind this system sought  
Sophists would cease their vain disputes,  
And from this source would nations know  
All that can make their heaven below

This deals not curses on mankind,  
Or dooms them to perpetual grief, 20  
If from its aid no joys they find,  
It damns them not for unbelief,  
Upon a more exalted plan  
Creatress nature dealt with man—

Joy to the day, when all agree  
On such grand systems to proceed,  
From fraud, design, and error free,  
And which to truth and goodness lead  
Then persecution will retreat  
And man's religion be complete 30  
1815

#### [THE RETIRED SEA CAPTAIN <sup>1</sup>]

THERE is a character, gentlemen, in common life which I feel myself most earnestly inclined to copy, were it only for my own amusement, and I can assure you, without having any particular person in view to hold up as the butt of my observations—a part which I have ever held to be both unfriendly, unjust, and ungenerous

The character that I would wish to copy 10  
from the aggregate of real life is no other than that of an old sea captain, become feeble with age and hardship, and now resolved in earnest to pass the remainder of his days on shore.

<sup>1</sup> from the *New York Daily Advertiser*, June 29, 1790, called there "A Speech on a New Subject"

We will suppose that he has hitherto had no house nor home except that which has so long floated with him on the bosom of the ocean. Having, then, quitted his vessel and bid adieu to her forever with tears in his eyes, when he first finds himself seriously and in good earnest a man of the shore, he looks about him with as much wildness and anxious concern as a landsman would that is left 10 swimming for his life in the middle of the Atlantic.

After sauntering about awhile in the city, taking especial care never to lose sight of the river, he at length agrees to board by the month at some boarding house as near as possible to the wharves, that he may have a full view of the shipping and an uninterrupted

prospect, as well as the odoriferous smell, of the docks and salt water.

His continuance here, however, is commonly of short duration. He has been so long accustomed to command that he cannot endure to be controlled by the landlady, who already begins to take airs upon her and treat him much in the same manner as he used to treat his second or third mate.

After shifting about from place to place, and having pestered every tavern and eating house in the city to supply him with lobster, sea pies, and pease porridge, he at length takes it into his head to look out for himself a wife. If you hear him describe the woman he would wish to make love to, it is in such a style and language as the following — *I would choose to have her full-bowed and lean abaft—built with a handsome sheer, but not moonsided. Breadth of beam is what I ever ad- 20 mired, as this gives her good bearings, her waterways ought to be well caulked, as small leaks here might do great damages, &c. &c.*—After some time he marries some old seaman's widow, who, from former conversation, can understand his discourse, and from a similar cause can endure the smell of pitch, tar, rosin, and turpentine, one or more of which substances he always has in moderate quantities sticking to his coat, breeches, waistcoat, or hair 30

He now begins to think of building a house. In this view he purchases a lot as close as possible to the river-side, and where the yard-arms of the shipping may extend entirely over his roof. If the high tides come into his cellar, so much the better, thus he calls dead water, and it pleases him much, as it sets all hands to work at the pumps and gives them all the labor and trouble of a leaky ship in a gale of 40 wind, without danger of going to the bottom.

As to his carpenters and joiners, they soon conclude him to be half crazy, as he is perpetually talking to them of dead-lights instead of window shutters, bulkheads instead of partitions, and spar-decks instead of roofs and upper floors. Instead of lapping or grooving his weatherboards, he insists upon square joints, which he obliges them to caulk with two or three threads of oakum and pay over with hot pitch. If there are any butts, he has

them secured with strong spikes or butt-bolts with a key and forelock, although a common twelve-penny nail or two might answer the purpose effectually.

If he keeps a shop, it is sure to be in the ship-chandlery way, as he abominates the scent of all other merchandise, and indeed either the ship chandlery business or a tavern, with boarding and lodging for seafaring men, commonly finishes the career of his existence. Should he by any accident be obliged to remove into the country, he is unhappy if not settled on the side of a river, where he may row out, and now and then take the latitude by observing the sun's altitude with a Hadley's quadrant. If he travels in a passage boat, he obstinately refuses to turn in during the heaviest rain, although the hands belonging to the vessel be amply sufficient for every purpose upon deck. In a journey by land he always lays by if the wind blows hard the contrary way.

Egg-nog is his favorite liquor in the morning, grog at eleven o'clock, and such wine as he can afford after dinner, which generally consists of salt pork and pease, with sea biscuit instead of bread. When he finds himself near his end, the idea that he is going to make a voyage upon discoveries constantly recurs to his imagination, and he makes his epitaph accordingly.

Such, gentlemen, are the strange vagaries of this extraordinary character—I have only, however, stretched out some of those principal traits which may give you some idea of the surprising influence of habit upon the human mind, much more might have been said, which nevertheless, for good reasons I have thought best to leave to the exercise of your own imaginations.

1790

### [TOMO CHEEK'S SOLILOQUY]

This supposed letter of a Creek Indian chief sent to bargain with the American government for terms of a treaty is of interest as combining Freneau's praise of primitive society with a deistic conception of nature and religion.

<sup>1</sup> printed in the *Jersey Chronicle*, July 18, 1795 as "The Creek Indian in Philadelphia, No. VII, Written about Midnight"

As I travel through the streets and by-ways of this village, I never fail hearing the condition of my brethren and myself commiserated by the men and women of the place, on account of what they call our savage way of life, when at home.

We, in our turn, no less pity them for living cooped up in dark cages and narrow boxes, where they have scarcely room to turn or breathe, where the cheerful rays of the sun never yet penetrated but are concealed from the wretched inhabitant by walls of stupendous height and thickness.

The most unrelenting storm, the darkest mourning cloth of clouds that ever overshadowed the face of the heavens, is sooner or later scattered and dissipated before the light of the great luminary: but in these deep alleys and narrow pathways reigns a perpetual gloom, the source of pining discontent and peevish melancholy.

There sits the artist on his bench, pale as the grass beneath the thick spreading oak; actuated, like a machine, by the will of another, he moves not from place to place, but is restrained by an artificial necessity to his gloomy habitation.

But in our country, and with us, a tree, on occasion, will serve us for a house. Our largest wigwams are erected and finished in a day, and admit the light and air in abundance. In summer, we allow the winds to blow freely through the sides, made of cane and wattles, in the winter, the fire is placed in the middle, and all enjoy an equal share. Our woods supply us with plenty of fuel, and for nothing; while here it is brought to the inhabitant in little riggardly parcels, and at the cost of much money. In many of their habitations here we are not allowed to see the cheerful blaze—it is confined in a thick dark case of iron, and throws out a deadly smothering heat that never fails to deject and afflict my spirit. In others, the fireplace is in the side of the wall—the master of the wigwam only enjoyeth the heat, and looketh with a stern eye on those who approach to partake of his little sneaking fire of two sticks.

But before the night is advanced too far, and the taper that yet burns brightly before me shall grow dim in the socket, I will put

down some few particulars of the manner of what is called the savage life, by the white men.

I feel a glow of reanimation at the recollection of the charming vision and would instantly return to enjoy it, were I not restrained by the frowns of the big men of the council, who have strictly enjoined my brethren and myself not to return without at least the looking-glasses, blankets, and brandy.

In the morning early, we rise from the bed of skins to hail the first dawn of the sun. We seize our bows and arrows—we fly hastily through the dews of the forests—we attack the deer, the stag, or the buffalo, and return with abundance of food for the whole family. Wherever we run it is amidst the luxuriant vegetation of Nature, the delectable regale of flowers and blossoms, and beneath trees bending with plump and joyous fruits.

By this time the stomach receives its food with a pleasure unknown to the puny sons of this huge village. Our drink is the milk of the goat, mingled with the clear water of the stream flowing over the white sand or yellow pebbles. It is that which every wise Indian prefers, because it is the drink prepared by the hand of nature.

Every desire of the heart is considered as a blessing of this our common mother. These desires are few and simple, and are almost always within our power to gratify. We can vary them at pleasure, and thus they are always new.

We are strangers to the cruel passion of jealousy, and consider that man as under the dominion of the foolish spirit who is distrustful of his wife. Our young women live constantly under the golden star of love, nor do we think the less of them if, before they are married, they indulge in that amiable passion.

In the forests, we acknowledge no distinction of property. The woods are as free as the waters, and the odious landmark was never seen to arrest the foot of the hunter.

We are carried along upon the great wheel of things. We trouble ourselves not about the uncertainties, or the seeming irregularities of its motions. When the comet extends its long glittering tail over our thick forests, or when the moon puts on her black mantle of mourn-

ing, we apprehend no cause of alarm. It is the work of the great spirit of the universe, who sleepeth not, but day and night guides his wonderful machine in the way that is best.

However numerous may be our wives, or our children around us, we afflict not our souls with trouble to know what will become of them when we are no more. Whether they shall be doomed to carry wood, as slaves, on the borders of the white men; or to bring the heavy load of waters from the springs of *Owya menah*, it is the same thing. We leave them to the care of that good Being who is the protector of the destitute.

We hear not the voice of the taxgatherer at our doors, to take away our bed of skins to support the luxuries of the proud and governments that riot on the spoils of the poor. We despise all tributes, and abhor those burdens which are imposed on the white men to tame and degrade the spirit.

Surrounded by forests that have no lines of boundary, we fear no storms—they blow far above us and are spent in the regions over the

tops of the trees. We are in dread of no droughts, for nature has so overshadowed the soil that the sunbeams cannot scorch it. It is therefore always moist, and favorable to the little gardens that give us the vegetables we want. The most impetuous torrents are arrested by the woods and thickets, and cannot sweep away our harvests before them.

Our manner of life renders us alert, cheerful, and courageous. We live in the midst of content; and when the time comes that we must depart to the silent mansions of our fathers, we depart without regret, because we are sure that our sleep, though in reality it may be long, can be to us but a moment. When that interrupting pause of life is once made, a total oblivion of the past ensues; but we suppose we shall soon revive, young, vigorous, and beautiful, to enjoy once more the chase of the forest and the pleasures of the wigwam. This seems to be the economy of Nature, at least with regard to the men of the woods.

1795

1752 -- *Timothy Dwight* -- 1817

**T**IMOTHY DWIGHT, born at Northampton, the grandson of Jonathan Edwards, was logically destined to illustrate eighteenth-century precocity. At four he read the Bible, at six he learned Latin from the books of older boys while they were at play; at thirteen he entered Yale, having completed much of the work of the first two years; at fifteen he decided to master all human knowledge; and at seventeen he graduated at the head of his class. As a tutor at Yale he was so popular that in 1777 the students wanted him to be its president.

He had already studied theology, written sacred music, striven, with Trumbull, Barlow, and Humphreys, to increase interest in literature at Yale, and written the first draft of his epic poem, *The Conquest of Canaan*. Now he joined the army as a chaplain and wrote patriotic songs, among them "Columbia, Columbia, to Glory Arise." In 1779 he returned to settle his father's affairs at Northampton, where he founded a coeducational school so successful that he required two assistants. Four years later, when he had gone to Greenfield Hill, Connecticut, as pastor of the Congregational church, he established a similar school there which brought students from the Middle and Southern states as well as from New England.

At Greenfield Hill, he was pleasantly associated with the "Connecticut Wits" of New Haven and Hartford, and published in 1785 as his contribution to their effort to provide a national literature his finished *The Conquest of Canaan*. This, the first notable attempt at epic writing to be published in America, is an account of the Bible narrative, enlarged to eleven books of pentameter couplets, with much neo-classical imagery and enlivened with references to Revolutionary and other contemporary events and circumstances. His nationalistic spirit is also shown in his long reflective poem *Greenfield Hill* (1794), describing the scenery and life of his neighborhood and defending agrarian Americanism. It is, in its several sections, avowedly imitative of recent and contemporary English poets such as Cowper and Goldsmith. Another work reflecting his topographic and nationalist proclivities is his prose journal of driving tours which he and Mrs. Dwight took throughout New England and New York during the college vacations, published after his death as *Travels in New England and New York* (4 vols., 1821-1822). This not only described the appearance, industries, and resources of the towns visited but also made shrewd observations upon the character of their inhabitants.

In 1795 he realized his ambition by becoming president of Yale, which he made again a stronghold of religious fundamentalism. So great was his influence that his few enemies called him Pope Dwight, and most people compared him to St. Paul. As both Calvinist and Federalist, he fought deism and democracy, not only in *The Triumph of Infidelity* (1788) and other satirical verse but also in such printed sermons as *The True Means of Establishing Public Happiness* (1795), *The Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy* (1798), and *The Duty of Americans in the Present Crisis* (1798). Once for each college generation, he delivered a course of lectures, *Theology Explained and Defended*, which was published in five volumes in 1818-1819. Although his long poems are forgotten, the hymn "I love thy kingdom, Lord" is still familiar. Narrow though Dwight was in some respects, he was a great teacher and a great personality. He encouraged the teaching of natural science, and modern education at Yale begins with his years of service. Like his grandfather Edwards, he represents the best qualities of eighteenth-century Puritanism.

There is no full-length modern life of Dwight. Early biographies are those by W. B. Sprague in Jared Sparks's *Library of American Biography*, Second Series, IV (1845), Benjamin Silliman, *A Sketch of the Life and Character of President Dwight* (1817); and Sereno E. Dwight, "Mémorial," prefixed to *Theology Defined and Explained* (1818-1819). Useful recent sketches are those by H. E. Starr in *DAB*; M. C. Tyler, *Three Men of Letters* (1895), 72-127; F. B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Yale College*, III (with bibliography, 1903); V. L. Parrington, *The Connecticut Wits* (1926). See also F. B. Dexter, "Student Life at Yale under President Dwight," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Oct., 1917); A. W. Griswold, "Three Puritans on Prosperity," *New England Quarterly*, VII, 475-493 (Sept., 1934); V. L. Parrington, *The Colonial Mind* (1927); T. A. Zunder, "Noah Webster and the *Conquest of Canaan*," *American Literature*, I, 200-202 (May, 1929); M. A. De W. Howe, *Classic Shades* (1928), 3-40.

## From THE TRIUMPH OF INFIDELITY

[*The Smooth Divine*]

Dwight published in 1788 a long verse satire directed against the imroads of deism and religious indifference and the activities of the liberal or Unitarian section of the New England Congregationalists. It was ironically dedicated to Voltaire

THERE smiled the smooth Divine, unused to wound

The sinner's heart with hell's alarming sound.  
No terrors on his gentle tongue attend;  
No grating truths the nicest ear offend  
That strange new-birth, that Methodist grace,<sup>1</sup>

Nor in his heart nor sermons found a place.  
Plato's fine tales he clumsily retold,  
Trite, fireside, moral seesaws, dull as old,  
His Christ and Bible placed at good remove,  
Guilt hell-deserving, and forgiving love 10  
'Twas best, he said, mankind should cease to sin:

Good fame required it, so did peace within  
Their honors, well he knew, would ne'er be driven,  
But hoped they still would please to go to heaven.

Each week he paid his visitation dues,  
Coaxed, jested, laughed; rehearsed the private news;

Smoked with each goody, thought her cheese excelled,  
Her pipe he lighted,<sup>2</sup> and her baby held.  
Or placed in some great town, with lacquered shoes,

Trim wig, and trimmer gown, and glistening hose, 20

He bowed, talked politics, learned manners mild,

Most meekly questioned, and most smoothly smiled,

At rich men's jests laughed loud, their stories praised,

Their wives' new patterns gazed, and gazed, and gazed;

<sup>1</sup> With the Methodist insistence on the necessity of a "new birth" or conversion and discovery of divine grace within the heart, Dr Dwight, as a Congregational fundamentalist, was in sympathy. <sup>2</sup> Smoking is not a new habit of American women, though now no longer restricted to the "common" people

Most daintily on pampered turkeys dined;  
Nor shrunk with fasting, nor with study pined:

Yet from their churches saw his brethren driven,

Who thundered truth, and spoke the voice of heaven,

Chilled trembling guilt in Satan's headlong path,

Charmed the feet back, and roused the ear of death. 30

"Let fools," he cried, "starve on, while prudent I

Snug in my nest shall live, and snug shall die."

1788

## From GREENFIELD HILL

[*The American Village*]

FAIR Vernal loveliest village of the west;  
Of every joy and every charm possess'd,  
How pleas'd amid thy varied walks I rove,  
Sweet, cheerful walks of innocence and love,  
And o'er thy smiling prospects cast my eyes,  
And see the seats of peace and pleasure, rise,  
And hear the voice of Industry resound,  
And mark the smile of Competence around!  
Hail, happy village! O'er thy cheerful lawns,  
With earliest beauty, spring delighted dawns,  
The northward sun begins his vernal smile, 11  
The spring-bird carols o'er the cressy rill  
The shower that patters in the ruffled stream,  
The ploughboy's voice that chides the lingering team,

The bee, industrious, with his busy song,  
The woodman's axe the distant groves among,  
The wagon, rattling down the rugged steep,  
The light wind, lulling every care to sleep,  
All these, with mingled music, from below,  
Deceive intruding sorrow as I go. 20

How pleas'd, fond Recollection, with a smile,

Surveys the varied round of wintery toil  
How pleas'd, amid the flowers that scent the plain,

Recalls the vanish'd frost and sleeted rain;  
The chilling damp, the ice-endangering street,  
And treacherous earth that slump'd beneath the feet.

Yet even stern winter's glooms could joy  
 inspire:  
 Then social circles grac'd the nutwood fire;  
 The axe resounded at the sunny door;  
 The swan, industrious, trimm'd his flaxen  
 store, 30  
 Or thresh'd with vigorous flail the bounding  
 wheat,  
 His poultry round him pilfering for their  
 meat;  
 Or slid his firewood on the creaking snow,  
 Or bore his produce to the man below,  
 Or o'er his rich returns exulting laugh'd,  
 Or pledg'd the healthful orchard's sparkling  
 draught:  
 While on his board, for friends and neighbors  
 spread,  
 The turkey smok'd, his busy housewife fed,  
 And Hospitality look'd smiling round,  
 And Leisure told his tale with gleeful sound. 40

Then too, the rough road hid beneath the  
 sleigh,  
 The distant friend despis'd a length of way,  
 And join'd the warm embrace and mingling  
 smile,  
 And told of all his bliss and all his toil,  
 And, many a month elaps'd, was pleas'd to  
 view  
 How well the household far'd, the children  
 grew,  
 While tales of sympathy deceiv'd the hour,  
 And sleep, amus'd, resign'd his wonted  
 power.

Yes! let the proud despise, the rich deride,  
 These humble joys, to Competence allied. 50  
 To me they bloom, all fragrant to my heart,  
 Nor ask the pomp of wealth nor gloss of art.  
 And as a bird, in prison long confin'd,  
 Springs from his open'd cage and mounts the  
 wind,  
 Thro' fields of flowers and fragrance gaily  
 flies,  
 Or re-assumes his birthright in the skies  
 Unprison'd thus from artificial joys,  
 Where pomp fatigues and fustful fashion  
 cloy,  
 The soul, reviving, loves to wander free  
 Thro' native scenes of sweet simplicity, 60  
 Thro' Peace' low vale, where Pleasure lingers  
 long,

And every songster tunes his sweetest song,  
 And Zephyr hastes to breathe his first perfume,  
 And Autumn stays to drop his latest bloom:  
 Till grown mature, and gathering strength  
 to roam,  
 She lifts her lengthen'd wings and seeks her  
 home.

But now the wintry glooms are vanish'd  
 all,  
 The lingering drift behind the shady wall;  
 The dark-brown spots that patch'd the snowy  
 field,  
 The surly frost that every bud conceal'd; 70  
 The russet veil, the way with slime o'erspread,  
 And all the saddening scenes of March are fled.

Sweet-smiling village! loveliest of the hills!  
 How green thy groves! How pure thy glassy  
 rills!  
 With what new joy I walk thy verdant streets!  
 How often pause to breathe thy gale of  
 sweets,  
 To mark thy well-built walls! thy budding  
 fields!  
 And every charm that rural nature yields,  
 And every joy to Competence allied, 79  
 And every good that Virtue gains from Pride!

No gripping landlord here alarms the door,  
 To halve, for rent, the poor man's little store  
 No haughty owner drives the humble swain  
 To some far refuge from his dread domain,  
 Nor wastes upon his robe of useless pride  
 The wealth which shivering thousands want  
 beside;  
 Nor in one palace sinks a hundred cots,  
 Nor in one manor drowns a thousand lots;  
 Nor on one table, spread for death and pain,  
 Devours what would a village well sustain. 90

O Competence, thou bless'd by Heaven's  
 decree,  
 How well exchang'd is empty pride for thee!  
 Oft to thy cot my feet delighted turn,  
 To meet thy cheerful smile, at peep of morn,  
 To join thy toils that bid the earth look gay,  
 To mark thy sports that hail the eve of May,  
 To see thy ruddy children at thy board,  
 And share thy temperate meal and frugal  
 hoard,  
 And every joy, by winning prattlers giv'n,  
 And every earnest of a future Heaven. 100



There the poor wanderer finds a table  
spread,  
The fireside welcome, and the peaceful bed.  
The needy neighbor, oft by wealth denied.  
There finds the little aids of life supplied:  
The horse that bears to mill the hard-earn'd  
grain;  
The day's work given, to reap the ripen'd  
plain;  
The useful team, to house the precious food,  
And all the offices of real good

There too, divine Religion is a guest,  
And all the Virtues join the daily feast. 110  
Kind Hospitality attends the door,  
To welcome in the stranger and the poor,  
Sweet Chastity, still blushing as she goes,  
And Patience smiling at her train of woes,  
And meek-eyed Innocence, and Truth refin'd,  
And Fortitude, of bold but gentle mind.

Thou pay'st the tax the rich man will not  
pay,  
Thou feed'st the poor the rich man drives  
away  
Thy sons, for freedom, hazard limbs and life,  
While pride applauds, but shuns the manly  
strife 120  
Thou prop'st religion's cause, the world  
around,  
And show'st thy faith in works, and not in  
sound.

Say, child of passion! while with idiot stare,  
Thou seest proud grandeur wheel her sunny  
car;  
While kings and nobles roll bespangled by,  
And the tall palace lessens in the sky;  
Say, while with pomp thy giddy brain runs  
round,  
What joys like these in splendor can be  
found?  
Ah, yonder turn thy wealth-enchanted eyes,  
Where that poor, friendless wretch expiring  
lies! 130  
Hear his sad partner shriek beside his bed,  
And call down curses on her landlord's head  
Who drove from yon small cot her household  
sweet  
To pine with want, and perish in the street.  
See the pale tradesman toil the livelong day  
To deck imperious lords, who never pay!

Who waste at dice their boundless breadth of  
soil,  
But grudge the scanty meed of honest toil.  
See hounds and horses riot on the store,  
By heaven created for the hapless poor! 140  
See half a realm one tyrant scarce sustain,  
While meager thousands round him glean  
the plain!  
See, for his mistress' robe, a village sold,  
Whose matrons shrink from nakedness and  
cold!  
See too the farmer<sup>1</sup> prow! around the shed,  
To rob the starving household of their bread,  
And seize with cruel fangs the helpless swain,  
While wives and daughters plead and weep  
in vain,  
Or yield to infamy themselves, to save 149  
Their sire from prison, famine, and the grave.

There too, foul luxury taints the putrid  
mind,  
And slavery there unbrutes the reasoning  
kind:  
There humble worth, in damps of deep  
despair,  
Is bound by poverty's eternal bar  
No motives bright the ethereal aim impart,  
Nor one fair ray of hope allures the heart.

But, O sweet Competence! how chang'd  
the scene,  
Where thy soft footsteps lightly print the  
green!  
Where Freedom walks erect, with manly port,  
And all the blessings to his side resort, 160  
In every hamlet, Learning builds her schools,  
And beggars' children gain her arts and rules,  
And mild Simplicity o'er manners reigns  
And blameless morals Purity sustains.

From thee the rich enjoyments round me  
spring,  
Where every farmer reigns a little king,  
Where all to comfort, none to danger, rise,  
Where pride finds few, but nature all supplies,  
Where peace and sweet civility are seen,  
And meek good-neighborhood endears the  
green 170  
Here every class (if classes those we call,  
Where one extended class embraces all,  
<sup>1</sup> i. e., the owner of the farm, as contrasted with the  
tiller of the soil

All mingling, as the rainbow's beauty blends,  
 Unknown where every hue begins or ends)  
 Each following each, with unobtrusive strife,  
 Wears every feature of improving life.  
 Each gains from other comeliness of dress,  
 And learns with gentle men to win and bless,  
 With welcome mild the stranger to receive,  
 And with plain, pleasing decency to live, 180  
 Refinement hence even humblest life im-  
 proves,

Not the loose fair that form and frippery loves,  
 But she whose mansion is the gentle mind,  
 Is thought and action virtuously refin'd.  
 Hence, wives and husbands act a lovelier part,  
 More just the conduct, and more kind the  
 heart,  
 Hence brother, sister, parent, child, and friend,  
 The harmony of life more sweetly blend,  
 Hence labor brightens every rural scene;  
 Hence cheerful plenty lives along the green,  
 Still Prudence eyes her board, with watchful  
 care, 191  
 And robes of thrift and neatness, all things  
 wear

But hark! what voice so gaily fills the wind?  
 Of care oblivious, whose that laughing mind?  
 'Tis yon poor black, who ceases now his song,  
 And whistling, drives the cumbrous wain  
 along

He never dragg'd, with groans, the galling  
 chain,

Nor hung, suspended, on th' infernal crane,  
 No dim white spots deform his face or hand,  
 Memorials hellish of the marking brand! 200  
 No seams of pincers, scars of scalding oil,  
 No waste of famine, and no wear of toil  
 But kindly fed and clad and treated, he  
 Slides on, thro' life, with more than common  
 glee

For here mild manners good to all impart  
 And stamp with infamy th' unfeeling heart;  
 Here law from vengeful rage the slave defends,  
 And here the gospel peace on earth extends

He toils, 'tis true, but shares his master's  
 toil,  
 With him he feeds the herd and trims the  
 soil, 210  
 Helps to sustain the house with clothes and  
 food,  
 And takes his portion of the common good,

Lost liberty his sole peculiar ill,  
 And fix'd submission to another's will.  
 Ill, ah, how great! Without that cheering sun,  
 The world is chang'd to one wide, frigid zone;  
 The mind, a chill'd exotic, cannot grow,  
 Nor leaf with vigor, nor with promise blow;  
 Pale, sickly, shrunk, it strives in vain to rise,  
 Scarce lives while living, and untimely dies

See fresh to life the Afric infant spring, 221  
 And plume its powers, and spread its little  
 wing!

Firm is its frame, and vigorous is its mind,  
 Too young to think, and yet to misery blind.  
 But soon he sees himself to slavery born,  
 Soon meets the voice of power, the eye of  
 scorn,

Sighs for the blessings of his peers, in vain,  
 Condition'd as a brute, though form'd a man.  
 Around he casts his fond, instinctive eyes,  
 And sees no good, to fill his wishes, rise 230  
 (No motive warms with animating beam,  
 Nor praise, nor property, nor kind esteem,  
 Bless'd independence on his native ground,  
 Nor sweet equality with those around.)  
 Himself and his, another's shrinks to find,  
 Levell'd below the lot of human kind  
 Thus, shut from honor's paths, he turns to  
 shame,

And filches the small good he cannot claim.  
 To sour and stupid sinks his active mind,  
 Finds joys in drink he cannot elsewhere find,  
 Rule disobeys, of half his labor cheats, 241  
 In some safe cot the pilfer'd turkey eats,  
 Rides hard by night the steed his art purloins,  
 Serene from conscience' bar himself essoins,  
 Sees from himself his sole redress must flow,  
 And makes revenge the balsam of his woe

Thus slavery's blast bids sense and virtue  
 die;

Thus lower'd to dust the sons of Afric lie  
 Hence sages grave, to lunar systems given,  
 Shall ask why two-legg'd brutes were made  
 by heaven, 250  
 Home seek what pair first peopled Afric's  
 vales,  
 And nice Monboddoo calculate their tails. . .

All hail, thou western world! by heaven  
 design'd  
 Th' example bright, to renovate mankind.

Soon shall thy sons across the mainland roam,  
And claim, on far Pacific shores, their home,  
Their rule, religion, manners, arts, convey,  
And spread their freedom to the Asian sea.

Where erst six thousand suns have roll'd the  
year 259

O'er plains of slaughter, and o'er wilds of fear,  
Towns, cities, fanes, shall lift their towery  
pride,

The village bloom, on every streamlet's side,  
Proud Commerce' mole the western surges  
lave;

The long, white spire lie smag'd on the wave,  
O'er morn's pellucid main expand their sails,  
And the starr'd ensign court Korean gales.

Then nobler thoughts shall savage trains  
inform;

Then barbarous passions cease the heart to  
storm;

No more the captive circling flames devour;  
Through the war path the Indian creep no  
more, 270

No midnight scout the slumbering village fire,  
Nor the scalp'd infant stain his gasping sire

But peace and truth illumine the twilight mind,  
The gospel's sunshine, and the purpose kind,  
Where marshes teem'd with death, shall meads  
unfold;

Untrodden cliffs resign their stores of gold;  
The dance refin'd on Albion's margin move,  
And her lone bowers rehearse the tale of  
love.

Where slept perennial night, shall science rise,  
And new-born Oxfords cheer the evening  
skies; 280

Milonic strains the Mexic hills prolong,  
And Louis murmur to Sicilian song.

Then to new climes the bliss shall trace its  
way,

And Tartar deserts hail the rising day;  
From the long torpor startled China wake;  
Her chains of misery rous'd Peruvia break,  
Man link to man; with bosom bosom twine,  
And one great bond the house of Adam join  
The sacred promise full completion know,  
And peace, and piety, the world o'erflow. 290

1794

### From TRAVELS IN, NEW ENGLAND AND NEW YORK

#### [*The Inhabitants of Vermont*]

Vermont and Maine, in their pioneer days, were strongholds of Jeffersonian Democracy, in opposition to the Federalist principles of Massachusetts and Connecticut. President Dwight's opinions are therefore somewhat tinged with party prejudice, though based upon sound observation of the usual causes of migration and the character of the first settlers. The similarity between his views of the unpropertied class and that of Trumbull's Tory squire M'Fingal is interesting.

VERMONT has been settled entirely from the other states of New England. The inhabitants have, of course, the New England character, with no other difference beside what is accidental. In the formation of colonies, those who are first inclined to emigrate are usually such as have met with difficulties at home. These are commonly joined by persons who, having large families and small farms, are induced for the sake of settling their children

comfortably to seek for new and cheaper lands. To both are always added the discontented, the enterprising, the ambitious, and the covetous. Many of the first and some of all these classes are found in every new American country, within ten years after its settlement has commenced. From this period kindred, friendship, and former neighborhood prompt others to follow them. Others still are allured by the prospect of gain, presented in every new country to the sagacious from the purchase and sale of lands, while not a small number are influenced by the brilliant stories which everywhere are told concerning most tracts during the early progress of their settlement.

A considerable part of all those who begin the cultivation of the wilderness may be denominated *foresters*, or *pioneers*. The business of these persons is no other than to cut down trees, build log-houses, lay open forested grounds to cultivation, and prepare the way for those who come after them. These men cannot live in regular society. They are too

idle, too talkative, too passionate, too prodigal, and too shiftless to acquire either property or character. They are impatient of the restraints of law, religion, and morality, grumble about the taxes by which rulers, ministers, and schoolmasters are supported; and complain incessantly, as well as bitterly, of the extortions of mechanics, farmers, merchants, and physicians, to whom they are always indebted. At the same time they are usually 10 possessed, in their own view, of uncommon wisdom; understand medical science, politics, and religion better than those who have studied them through life, and although they manage their own concerns worse than any other men, feel perfectly satisfied that they could manage those of the nation far better than the agents to whom they are committed by the public. After displaying their own talents and worth, after censuring the weakness and wickedness of their superiors, after exposing the injustice of the community in neglecting to invest persons of such merit with public offices in many an eloquent harangue, uttered by many a kitchen fire, in every blacksmith's shop, and in every corner of the streets, and finding all their efforts vain, they become at length discouraged, and under pressure of poverty, the fear of a gaol, and the consciousness of public contempt, leave 20 their native places and betake themselves to the wilderness.

Here they are obliged either to work or to starve. They accordingly cut down some trees and girdle others, they furnish themselves with an ill-built log-house and a worse barn, and reduce part of the forest into fields, half-enclosed and half-cultivated. The forests furnish browse, and their fields yield a stunted herbage. On this scanty provision they feed 40 a few cattle, and with these and the penurious products of their labor, eke out by hunting and fishing, they keep their families alive.

A farm, thus far cleared, promises immediate subsistence to a better husbandman. A log-house, thus built, presents, when repaired with moderate exertions, a shelter for his family. Such a husbandman is therefore induced by these little advantages, where the soil and situation please him, to purchase such 50 a farm, when he would not plant himself in an

absolute wilderness. The proprietor is always ready to sell, for he loves this irregular, adventurous, half-working and half-lounging life; and hates the sober industry and prudent economy by which his bush pasture might be changed into a farm, and himself raised to thrift and independence. The bargain is soon made. The forester, receiving more money for his improvements than he ever before possessed and a price for the soil somewhat enhanced by surrounding settlements, willingly quits his house to build another like it, and his farm to girdle trees, hunt, and saunter in another place. His wife accompanies him only from a sense of duty or necessity, and secretly pines for the quiet, orderly, friendly society to which she originally bade a reluctant farewell. Her husband, in the meantime, becomes less and less a civilized man; and almost every thing in the family which is amiable and meritorious is usually the result of her principles, care, and influence.

The second proprietor is commonly a farmer, and with an industry and spirit deserving no small commendation changes the desert into a fruitful field.

This change is accomplished much more rapidly in some places than in others, as various causes, often accidental, operate. In some instances a settlement is begun by farmers and assumes the aspect of regular society from its commencement. Thus, to some extent, is always the fact; and the greater number of the first planters are probably of this description; but some of them also are foresters, and sometimes a majority.

You must have remarked a very sensible difference in the character of different towns through which I have passed. This diversity 18 is in no small degree derived from the original character of the planters in the different cases.

The class of men who have been the principal subject of these remarks have already straggled onward from New England, as well as from other parts of the Union, to Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> In a political view their emigration is of very serious utility to the ancient settlements. All countries contain restless inhabitants, men impatient of labor, men who will contract

<sup>1</sup> i. e., the entire trans-Mississippi tract acquired by the Louisiana Purchase.

debts without intending to pay them, who had rather talk than work, whose vanity persuades them that they are wise and prevents them from knowing that they are fools, who are delighted with innovation, who think places of power and profit due to their peculiar merits, who feel that every change from good order and established society will be beneficial to themselves, who have nothing to lose and therefore expect to be gainers by every scramble, and who, of course, spend life in disturbing others with the hope of gaining something for themselves. Under despotic governments they are awed into quiet; but in every free community they create, to a greater or less extent, continual turmoil, and have often overturned the peace, liberty, and happiness of their fellow-citizens. In the Roman commonwealth, as before in the republics of Greece, they were emptied out as soldiers upon the surrounding countries and left the sober inhabitants in comparative quiet at home. It is true, they often threw these states into confusion and sometimes overturned the government. But if they had not been thus thrown off from the body politic, its life would have been of a momentary duration. As things actually were, they finally ruined all these states. For some of them had, as some of them always will have, sufficient talents to do mischief, at times, very extensive. The Gracchi, Clodius, Marius, and Mark Antony were men of this character. Of this character is every demagogue, whatever may be his circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Power and profit are the only ultimate objects which every such man, with a direction as steady as that of the needle to the pole, pursues with a greediness unlimited and inextinguishable.

Formerly the energetic government established in New England, together with the prevailing high sense of religion and morals and the continually pressing danger from the French and the savages, compelled the inhabitants into habits of regularity and good order, not surpassed perhaps in the world. But since the American Revolution, our situation has become less favorable to the existence, as well as to the efficacy, of these great

means of internal peace. The former exact and decisive energy of the government has been obviously weakened. From our ancient dangers we have been delivered, and the deliverance was a distinguished blessing; but the sense of danger regularly brings with it a strong conviction that safety cannot be preserved without exact order and a ready submission to lawful authority.

The institutions and the habits of New England, more, I suspect, than those of any other country, have prevented or kept down this noxious disposition, but they cannot entirely prevent either its existence or its effects. In mercy, therefore, to the sober, industrious, and well-disposed inhabitants, Providence has opened in the vast Western wilderness a retreat sufficiently alluring to draw them away from the land of their nativity. We have many troubles even now, but we should have many more if this body of foresters had remained at home.

It is, however, to be observed that a considerable number even of these people become sober, industrious citizens merely by the acquisition of property. The love of property to a certain degree seems indispensable to the existence of sound morals. I have never had a servant in whom I could confide except such as were desirous to earn and preserve money. The conveniences and the character attendant on the preservation of property fix even these restless men at times, when they find themselves really able to accumulate it, and persuade them to a course of regular industry. I have mentioned that they sell the soil of their first farms at an enhanced price, and that they gain for their improvements on them what, to themselves at least, is a considerable sum. The possession of this money removes, perhaps for the first time, the despair of acquiring property, and awakens the hope and the wish to acquire more. The secure possession of property demands every moment the hedge of law, and reconciles a man, originally lawless, to the restraints of government. Thus situated, he sees that reputation also is within his reach. Ambition forces him to aim at it, and compels him to a life of sobriety and decency. That his children may obtain this benefit, he is obliged to send them to school, and to unite with

<sup>1</sup> Dwight had in mind such men as Matthew Lyon, Democratic leader in Vermont.

those around him in supporting a school-master. His neighbors are disposed to build a church and settle a minister. A regard to his own character, to the character and feelings of his family, and very often to the solicitations

of his wife, prompts him to contribute to both these objects, to attend, when they are compassed, upon the public worship of God, and perhaps to become in the end a religious man

1810

1821

## 1754 -- Joel Barlow -- 1812

JOEL BARLOW, the son of a conservative Connecticut farmer, led a versatile and successful life both in his own country and in Europe. At Yale, he was tutored by Timothy Dwight, fought in the Revolution during a summer vacation, and at the public examination of his class in 1778, read his first long poem, *The Prospect of Peace*. In the next nine years he studied philosophy at Yale, taught school, managed a business, published a journal, wrote a new version of the Psalms, began to practise law, and worked on his epic, *The Vision of Columbus*, which appeared in nine books and more than five thousand lines in 1787.

In 1788 he went to Europe as agent for the Scioto Land Company. There he abandoned his Connecticut religion and politics, associated with Thomas Paine, enthusiastically supported the French Revolution, and in 1792 attacked the monarchical principle in *The Conspiracy of Kings* (1792), and the prose treatise *Advice to the Privileged Orders*, which was suppressed in England as being in a class with Paine's *Rights of Man*. He was made a citizen of France, acquired a considerable fortune in that country, and was appointed in 1795 United States minister to Algeria, where he made important treaties with Algeria, Tripoli, and Tunis. In 1805 he returned to America, built a mansion on the Potomac, and enlarged his *Vision of Columbus* into a grandiose epic, *The Columbiad*. In 1811 Madison assigned to him the difficult post of minister to France. In 1812, on a mission to confer with Napoleon during his Russian campaign, he became involved in the retreat from Moscow and died in Poland as a result of exposure.

In his two epic poems, a dream of the aged Columbus is used to summarize the whole history of the American continent to Barlow's own day. *The Columbiad* embodies his new political and religious radicalism, with prophecies for such a future federation of the world as Tennyson later foretold. His mock-epic *Hasty Pudding* (1793), in easy, witty verse, inspired by homesickness during a residence in Savoy, shows Barlow as his friends knew him better than does his serious verse.

Selections from Barlow's chief works, enumerated above, are included, with an introduction, in V. L. Parrington, *The Connecticut Wits* (1926). His life to 1787 is fully told in T. A. Zunder, *The Early Days of Joel Barlow* (1934). Other biographies are C. B. Todd, *Life and Letters*

of *Joel Barlow* (1886) and M. C. Tyler, *Three Men of Letters* (1895), 129-180. See also *DAB*; V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927), I, 382-389; V. P. Squires, "Joel Barlow—Patriot, Democrat, and Man of Letters," *Quarterly Journal of the University of North Dakota*, IX, 299-308; F. B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College* (1907), IV, 3-16; C. V. Miller, *Joel Barlow: Revolutionist*, London, 1791-92 (1932), "Six Letters of Joel Barlow to Oliver Wolcott," *New England Quarterly*, II, 475-489 (July, 1929); Maria dell' Isola, "Joel Barlow Precurseur de la Société des Nations," *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, XIV, 283-296 (April-June, 1934); Leon Howard, *The Vision of Joel Barlow* (1937), and M. R. Adams, "Joel Barlow, Political Romanticist," *American Literature*, IX, 113-152.

## THE HASTY PUDDING

## CANTO I

Ye Alps audacious, through the heavens that  
rise,  
To cramp the day and hide me from the skies,  
Ye Gallic flags, that o'er their heights unfurled,  
Bear death to kings and freedom to the world,  
I sing not you A softer theme I choose,  
A virgin theme, unconscious of the muse,  
But fruitful, rich, well suited to inspire  
The purest frenzy of poetic fire

Despise it not, ye bards to terror steeled,  
Who hurl your thunders round the epic field,  
Nor ye who strain your midnight throats to  
sing 11  
Joys that the vineyard and the stillhouse bring;  
Or on some distant fair your notes employ,  
And speak of raptures that you ne'er enjoy  
I sing the sweets I know, the charms I feel,  
My morning incense, and my evening meal,—  
The sweets of Hasty Pudding. Come, dear  
bowl,  
Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul.  
The milk beside thee, smoking from the kine,  
Its substance mingled, married in with thine,  
Shall cool and temper thy superior heat, 21  
And save the pains of blowing while I eat.

Oh! could the smooth, the emblematic song  
Flow like thy genial juices o'er my tongue,  
Could those mild morsels in my numbers  
chime,  
And, as they roll in substance, roll in rime,  
No more thy awkward, unpoetic name  
Should shun the muse or prejudice thy fame;  
But, rising grateful to the accustomed ear,  
All bards should catch it, and all realms re-  
vere! 30

Assist me first with pious toil to trace  
Through wrecks of time, thy lineage and thy  
race,  
Declare what lovely squaw, in days of yore,  
(Ere great Columbus sought thy native shore)  
First gave thee to the world, her works of  
fame  
Have lived indeed, but lived without a name  
Some tawny Ceres, goddess of her days,  
First learned with stones to crack the well-  
dried maize,  
Through the rough sieve to shake the golden  
shower,  
In boiling water stir the yellow flour 40  
The yellow flour, bestrewn and stirred with  
haste,  
Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,  
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,  
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface  
swim,  
The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,  
And the whole mass its true consistence takes.

Could but her sacred name, unknown so  
long,  
Rise, like her labors, to the son of song,  
To her, to them I'd consecrate my lays,  
And blow her pudding with the breath of  
praise. 50  
If 'twas Oella<sup>1</sup> whom I sang before,  
I here ascribe her one great virtue more.  
Not through the rich Peruvian realms alone  
The fame of Sol's sweet daughter should be  
known,  
But o'er the world's wide climes should live  
secure,  
Far as his rays extend, as long as they en-  
dure.

<sup>1</sup> Peruvian princess in Barlow's *Vision of Columbus* (1787)

Dear Hasty Pudding, what unpromised joy  
 Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy!  
 Doomed o'er the world through devious paths  
 to roam,  
 Each clime my country, and each house my  
 home, 60  
 My soul is soothed, my cares have found an  
 end,  
 I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend.

For thee through Paris, that corrupted town,  
 How long in vain I wandered up and down,  
 Where shameless Bacchus, with his drenching  
 board,  
 Cold from his cave usurps the morning board.  
 London is lost in smoke and steeped in tea,  
 No Yankee there can lisp the name of thee,  
 The uncouth word, a libel on the town,  
 Would call a proclamation from the crown. 70  
 For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full rays,  
 Chilled in their fogs, exclude the generous  
 maize  
 A grain whose rich, luxuriant growth requires  
 Short, gentle showers, and bright, ethereal  
 fires

But here, though distant from our native  
 shore,  
 With mutual glee, we meet and laugh once  
 more  
 The same! I know thee by that yellow face,  
 That strong complexion of true Indian race,  
 Which time can never change, nor soil impair,  
 Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid air;  
 For endless years, through every mild do-  
 main, 81  
 Where grows the maize, there thou art sure to  
 reign

But man, more fickle, the bold licence  
 claims,  
 In different realms to give thee different names.  
 Thee the soft nations round the warm Levant  
*Polante* call, the French, of course, *Polante*  
 E'en in thy native regions, how I blush  
 To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*  
 On Hudson's banks while men of Belgic  
 spawn  
 Insult and eat thee by the name *Suppawn*. 90  
 All spurious appellations, void of truth;  
 I've better known thee from my earliest youth  
 Thy name is *Hasty Pudding!* thus my sire

Was wont to greet thee fuming from his fire;  
 And while he argued in thy just defense  
 With logic clear he thus explained the sense:  
 "In haste the boiling caldron, o'er the blaze,  
 Receives and cooks the ready powdered maize,  
 In haste 'tis served, and then in equal haste,  
 With cooling milk, we make the sweet re-  
 past. 100

No carving to be done, no knife to grate  
 The tender ear and wound the stony plate,  
 But the smooth spoon, just fitted to the lip,  
 And taught with art the yielding mass to dip,  
 By frequent journeys to the bowl well stored,  
 Performs the hasty honors of the board."  
 Such is thy name, significant and clear,  
 A name, a sound to every Yankee dear,  
 But most to me, whose heart and palate chaste  
 Preserve my pure, hereditary taste. 110

There are who strive to stamp with disre-  
 pute  
 The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;  
 In tropes of high-strained wit, while gaudy  
 prigs  
 Compare thy nursing, man, to pampered pigs,  
 With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,  
 Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.  
 What though the generous cow gives me to  
 quaff  
 The milk nutritious am I then a calf?  
 Or can the genius of the noisy swine,  
 Though nursed on pudding, thence lay claim  
 to mine? 120  
 Sure the sweet song I fashion to thy praise,  
 Runs more melodious than the notes they  
 raise.

My song, resounding in its grateful glee,  
 No merit claims: I praise myself in thee.  
 My father loved thee through his length of  
 days!  
 For thee his fields were shaded o'er with maize;  
 From thee what health, what vigor he pos-  
 sessed,  
 Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;  
 Thy constellation ruled my natal morn,  
 And all my bones were made of Indian corn.

Delicious grain, whatever form it take, 131  
 To roast or boil, to smother or to bake,  
 In every dish 'tis welcome still to me,  
 But most, my Hasty Pudding, most in thee.



Let the green succotash with thee contend;  
 Let beans and corn their sweetest juices blend;  
 Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,  
 And a long slice of bacon grace their side,  
 Not all the plate, how famed soe'er it be,  
 Can please my palate like a bowl of thee. 140  
 Some talk of hoe-cake, fair Virginia's pride!  
 Rich johnny-cake this mouth has often tried,  
 Both please me well, their virtues much the  
 same,

Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,  
 Except in dear New England, where the last  
 Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste,  
 To give it sweetness and improve the taste.  
 But place them all before me, smoking hot,  
 The big, round dumpling, rolling from the  
 pot;

The pudding of the bag, whose quivering  
 breast, 150  
 With suet lined, leads on the Yankee feast,  
 The charlotte brown, within whose crusty  
 sides

A belly soft the pulpy apple hides,  
 The yellow bread whose face like amber glows  
 And all of Indian that the bakepan knows,—  
 You tempt me not, my favorite greets my eyes,  
 To that loved bowl my spoon by instinct flies

## CANTO II

To mix the food by vicious rules of art,  
 To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,  
 To make mankind to social virtue sour,  
 Cram o'er each dish, and be what they de-  
 vour;  
 For thus the kitchen muse first framed her  
 book,  
 Commanding sweats to stream from every  
 cook;  
 Children no more their antic gambols tried,  
 And friends to physic wondered why they  
 died

Not so the Yankee' his abundant feast,  
 With simples furnished and with plainness  
 dressed, 10  
 A numerous offspring gathers round the board,  
 And cheers alike the servant and the lord;  
 Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joy-  
 ous taste,  
 And health attends them from the short repast

While the full pail rewards the milkmaid's  
 toil,  
 The mother sees the morning caldron boil;  
 To stir the pudding next demands their care,  
 To spread the table and the bowls prepare;  
 To feed the household as their portions cool  
 And send them all to labor or to school. 20

Yet may the simplest dish some rules impart,  
 For nature scorns not all the aids of art.  
 E'en Hasty Pudding, purest of all food,  
 May still be bad, indifferent, or good,  
 As sage experience the short process guides,  
 Or want of skill, or want of care presides.  
 Whoe'er would form it on the surest plan,  
 To rear the child and long sustain the man,  
 To shield the morals while it mends the size,  
 And all the powers of every food supplies,—  
 Attend the lesson that the muse shall bring,  
 Suspend your spoons, and listen while I sing

But since, O man! thy life and health de-  
 mand 33  
 Not food alone, but labor from thy hand,  
 First, in the field, beneath the sun's strong rays,  
 Ask of thy mother earth the needful maize,  
 She loves the race that courts her yielding soil,  
 And gives her bounties to the sons of toil

When now the ox, obedient to thy call,  
 Repays the loan that filled the winter stall, 40  
 Pursue his traces o'er the furrowed plain,  
 And plant in measured hills the golden grain  
 But when the tender germ begins to shoot,  
 And the green spire declares the sprouting root,  
 Then guard your nursing from each greedy foe,  
 The insidious worm, the all-devouring crow  
 A little ashes sprinkled round the spire,  
 Soon steeped in rain, will bid the worm retire,  
 The feathered robber with his hungry maw  
 Swift flies the field before your man of straw,  
 A frightful image, such as schoolboys bring  
 When met to burn the Pope or hang the King.

Thrice in the season, through each verdant  
 row, 53  
 Wield the strong plowshare and the faithful  
 hoe,  
 The faithful hoe, a double task that takes,  
 To till the summer corn and roast the winter  
 cakes.

Slew springs the blade, while checked by  
chilling rains,  
Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer gains,  
But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,  
Then start the juices, then the roots expand; 60  
Then, like a column of Corinthian mold,  
The stalk struts upward and the leaves unfold,  
The bushy branches all the ridges fill,  
Entwine their arms, and kiss from hill to hill  
Here cease to vex them; all your cares are  
done  
Leave the last labors to the parent sun;  
Beneath his genial smiles, the well-dressed  
field,  
When autumn calls, a plenteous crop shall  
yield

Now the strong foliage bears the standards  
high,  
And shoots the tall top-gallants to the sky, 70  
The suckling ears their silky fringes bend,  
And pregnant grown, their swelling coats dis-  
tend,  
The loaded stalk, while still the burden grows,  
O'erhangs the space that runs between the rows,  
High as a hop-field waves the silent grove,  
A safe retreat for little thefts of love,  
When the pledged roasting-ears invite the maid  
To meet her swain beneath the new-formed  
shade,  
His generous hand unloads the cumbrous hull,  
And the green spoils her ready basket fill, 80  
Small compensation for the twofold bliss,  
The promised wedding, and the present kiss

Slight depredations these, but now the  
moon  
Calls from his hollow tree the sly raccoon,  
And while by night he bears his prize away,  
The bolder squirrel labors through the day  
Both thieves alike, but provident of time,  
A virtue rare, that almost hides their crime  
Then let them steal the little stores they can,  
And fill their granaries from the toils of  
man, 90  
We've one advantage where they take no  
part—  
With all their wiles, they ne'er have found the  
art  
To boil the Hasty Pudding; here we shine  
Superior far to tenants of the pine;

This envied boon to man shall still belong,  
Unshared by them in substance or in song.

At last the closing season browns the plain,  
And ripe October gathers in the grain;  
Deep-loaded carts the spacious corn-house  
fill,  
The sack distended marches to the mill, 100  
The laboring mill beneath the burden groans,  
And showers the future pudding from the  
stones;  
Till the glad housewife greets the powdered  
gold,  
And the new crop exterminates the old.  
Ah, who can sing what every wight must feel,  
The joy that enters with the bag of meal,  
A general jubilee pervades the house,  
Wakes every child and gladdens every mouse!

## CANTO III

The days grow short, but though the falling  
sun  
To the glad swain proclaims his day's work  
done,  
Night's pleasing shades his various tasks pro-  
long,  
And yield new subjects to my various song.  
For now, the corn-house filled, the harvest  
home,  
The invited neighbors to the husking come,  
A frolic scene, where work, and mirth, and  
play,  
Unite their charms to chase the hours away.

Where the huge heap lies centered in the  
hall,  
The lamp suspended from the cheerful wall, to  
Brown, corn-fed nymphs, and strong, hard-  
handed beaux,  
Alternate ranged, extend in circling rows,  
Assume their seats, the solid mass attack;  
The dry husks rustle, and the corncobs crack,  
The song, the laugh, alternate notes resound,  
And the sweet cider trips in silence round.

The laws of husking every wight can tell;  
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well.  
For each red ear a general kiss he gains,  
With each smut ear she smuts the luckless  
swains, 20

But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,  
 Red as her lips and taper as her waist,  
 She walks the round and culls one favored  
   bean,  
 Who leaps the hucious tribute to bestow.  
 Various the sport, as are the wits and brains  
 Of well-pleased lasses and contending swains;  
 Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,  
 And he that gets the last ear wins the day

Meanwhile, the housewife urges all her care,  
 The well-earned feast to hasten and pre-  
   pare. 30  
 The sifted meal already waits her hand,  
 The milk is strained, the bowls in order stand,  
 The fire flames high; and as a pool—that  
   takes  
 The headlong stream that o'er the milldam  
   breaks—  
 Foams, roars, and rages with incessant toils,  
 So the vexed caldron rages, roars, and boils.

First with clean salt she seasons well the  
   food,  
 Then strews the flour and thickens all the  
   flood  
 Long o'er the simmering fire she lets it stand—  
 To stir it well demands a stronger hand— 40  
 The husband takes his turn, and round and  
   round  
 The ladle flies, at last the toil is crowned,  
 When to the board the thronging huskers  
   pour,  
 And take their seats as at the corn before

I leave them at their feast. There still belong  
 More useful matters to my faithful song,  
 For rules there are, though ne'er unfolded yet,  
 Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be  
   eat.

Some with molasses line the luscious treat,  
 And mix, like bards, the useful with the sweet.  
 A wholesome dish, and well deserving  
   praise, 51  
 A great resource in those bleak, wintry days,  
 When the chilled earth lies buried deep in  
   snow,  
 And raging Boreas dries the shivering cow

Blest cowl thy praise shall still my notes  
   employ  
 Great source of health, the only source of joy,

Mother of Egypt's god;—but sure for me,  
 Were I to leave my God I'd worship thee.  
 How oft thy teats these pious hands have  
   prest  
 How oft thy bounties proved my only  
   feast! 60  
 How oft I've fed thee with my favorite grain,  
 And roared, like thee, to see thy children  
   slain!

Ye swains who know her various worth to  
   prize,  
 Ah! house her well from winter's angry skies.  
 Potatoes, pumpkins, should her sadness cheer,  
 Corn from your crib, and mashes from your  
   beer;  
 When spring returns, she'll well acquit the  
   loan,  
 And nurse at once your infants and her own.  
 Milk then with pudding I should always  
   choose;  
 To this in future I confine my muse, 70  
 Till she in haste some further hunts unfold,  
 Well for the young, nor useless to the old  
 First in your bowl the milk abundant take,  
 Then drop with care along the silver lake  
 Your flakes of pudding, these at first will hide  
 Their little bulk beneath the swelling tide,  
 But when their growing mass no more can sink,  
 When the soft island looms above the brink,  
 Then check your hand; you've got the portion  
   due,  
 So taught our sires, and what they taught is  
   true. 80

There is a choice in spoons Though small  
   appear  
 The nice distinction, yet to me 'tis clear.  
 The deep-bowled Gallic spoon, contrived to  
   scoop  
 In ample draughts the thin, diluted soup,  
 Performs not well in those substantial things,  
 Whose mass adhesive to the metal clings;  
 Where the strong labial muscles must embrace  
 The gentle curve, and sweep the hollow space  
 With ease to enter and discharge the freight,  
 A bowl less concave, but still more dilate, 90  
 Becomes the pudding best. The shape, the size,  
 A secret rests, unknown to vulgar eyes.  
 Experienced feeders can alone impart  
 A rule so much above the lore of art.

These tuneful lips that thousand spoons have  
tried,

With just precision could the point decide,  
Though not in song; the muse but poorly  
shines

In cones, and cubes, and geometric lines,  
Yet the true form, as near as she can tell,  
Is that small section of a goose-egg shell, 100  
Which in two equal portions shall divide  
The distance from the center to the side

Fear not to slaver; 'tis no deadly sin.  
Like the free Frenchman, from your joyous  
chin

Suspend the ready napkin, or, like me,  
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your knee,  
Just in the zenith your wise head project,  
Your full spoon, rising in a line direct,  
Bold as a bucket, heeds no drops that fall,  
The wide-mouthed bowl will surely catch  
them all 110

1792-93

1796

From THE COLUMBIAD

[*A League of Nations*]

EAGER he<sup>1</sup> looked another train of years  
Had rolled unseen and brighten'd still their  
spheres.

Earth, more resplendent in the floods of day,  
Assumed new smiles and flush'd around him  
lay

Green swell the mountains, calm the oceans  
roll,

Fresh beams of beauty kindle round the pole,  
Through all the range where shores and seas  
extend,

In tenfold pomp the works of peace ascend  
Robed in the bloom of spring's eternal year,  
And ripe with fruits, the same glad fields ap-  
pear, 10

O'er hills and vales perennial gardens run,  
Cities unwall'd stand sparkling in the sun,  
The streams, all freighted from the bounteous  
plain,

Swell with the load and labor to the main,  
Whose stormless waves command a steadier  
gale

And prop the pinions of a bolder sail;

<sup>1</sup> Columbus, whose vision embraced the history of  
the American continent

Swayed with the weight, each ocean toils,  
And joyous nature's full perfection smiles

Filled with unfolding fate, the visioned age  
Now leads its actors on a broader stage, 20  
When, clothed majesty in the robes of state,  
Moved by one voice, in general congress meet  
The legates of all empires. 'Twas the place<sup>1</sup>  
Where wretched men first firm'd their wander-  
ing pace,

Ere yet, beguiled, the dark, delirious hordes  
Began to fight for altars and for lords;  
Nile washes still the soil, and feels once more  
The works of wisdom press his peopled shore.

In this mid site, this monumental clime,  
Reared by all realms to brave the wrecks of  
time 30

A spacious dome swells up, commodious  
great,

The last resort, the unchanging scene of state.  
On rocks of adamant the walls ascend,  
Tall columns heave, and sky-like arches bend,  
Bright o'er the golden roofs the glittering  
spires

Far in the concave meet the solar fires;  
Four blazing fronts, with gates unfolding high,  
Look with immortal splendor round the sky  
Hither the delegated sires ascend,  
And all the cares of every clime attend. 40  
As the blest band, the guardian guides of  
heaven,

To whom the care of stars and suns is given,  
When one great circuit shall have proved their  
spheres

And time well taught them how to wind their  
years,

Shall meet in general council, called to state  
The laws and labors that their charge await,  
To learn, to teach, to settle how to hold  
Their course more glorious as their lights  
unfold,

From all the bounds of space (the mandate  
known)

They wing their passage to the eternal  
throne, 50

Each through his far dim sky illumines the road,  
And sails and centres toward the mount of  
God,

There in mid universe their seats to rear,  
Exchange their counsels and their works com-  
pare.

<sup>2</sup> Egypt, selected apparently for its central location

So, from all tracts of earth, this gathering  
throng

In ships and chariots shape their course along,  
Reach with unwonted speed the place as-  
signed,<sup>1</sup>

To hear and give the counsel of mankind.

South of the sacred mansion, first resort  
The assembled sires, and pass the spacious  
court. 60

Here in his porch earth's figured Genius  
stands,

Truth's mighty mirror poising in his hands.  
Graved on the pedestal and chased in gold,  
Man's noblest arts their symbol forms un-  
fold:—

His tillage and his trade, with all the store  
Of wondrous fabrics and of useful lore,  
Labors that fashion to his sovereign sway  
Earth's total powers, her soil and air and sea,  
Force them to yield their fruits at his known  
call,

And bear his mandates round the rolling  
ball, 70

Beneath the footstool all destructive things,  
The mask of priesthood and the mace of  
kings,

Lie trampled in the dust, for here at last  
Fraud, folly, error all their emblems cast.  
Each envoy here unloads his wearied hand  
Of some old idol from his native land  
One flings a pagod on the mingled heap,  
One lays a crescent, one a cross to sleep;<sup>2</sup>  
Swords, sceptres, mitres, crowns and globes  
and stars,

<sup>1</sup> Barlow anticipates the acceleration of travel but does not foresee aerial navigation. <sup>2</sup> Like Paine, Barlow considers religious systems, as well as monarchical governments, as instruments for the enslavement of mankind. Pagod (pagoda), crescent, and cross symbolize the religions of the East, Mohammedanism, and Christianity.

Codes of false fame and stimulants to wars 80  
Sink in the settling mass, since guile began,  
These are the agents of the woes of man.

Now the full concourse, where the arches  
bend,

Pour through by thousands and the seats  
ascend.

Far as the centred eye can range around  
Or the deep trumpet's solemn voice resound,  
Long rows of reverent sires sublime extend,  
And cares of worlds on every brow suspend  
High in the front, for soundest wisdom  
known,

A sire elect in peerless grandeur shone, 90  
He opened calm the universal cause,

To give each realm its limit and its laws,  
Bid the last breath of tired contention cease  
And bind all regions in the leagues of peace,  
Till one confederate, condependent sway  
Spread with the sun and bound the walks of  
day,

One centred system, one all-ruling soul  
Lave through the parts to regulate the whole  
"Here, then," said Hesper,<sup>1</sup> with a blissful  
smile,

"Behold the fruits of thy long years of  
toil. 100

To yon bright borders of Atlantic day  
Thy swelling pinions led the trackless way,  
And taught mankind such useful deeds to  
dare,

To trace new seas and happy nations rear,  
Till by fraternal hands their sails unfurled  
Have waved at last in union o'er the world " 2

<sup>1</sup> Spirit of the West, America. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Tennyson's use of the same rhymes in "Locksley Hall"

"Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-  
flags were furled

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the  
world "

## Minor Lyrists

MRS. SARAH WENTWORTH (APTHORP) MORTON (1759-1846), of Boston, was the chief woman poet in America in her generation. Of her most ambitious undertaking, a long poem dealing with the American Revolution, only one section, called *Beacon Hill*, was published, in 1797. She wrote a number of occasional lyrics, of which the best known is "The African Chief," quoted and praised by Whittier in *Snow-Bound*. It is one of the earliest of a number of similar poems, romanticizing the life of the Negroes in Africa and protesting against the inhumanity of the slave trade.

Thomas Green Fessenden (1771-1837) succeeded John Trumbull as the chief political verse satirist of the Federalist regime. A New Hampshire man associated with Joseph Dennie and Royall Tyler in the little group of literary men at Walpole, New Hampshire, he first developed his Hudibrastic talents in England in 1803, in the *Terrible Tractoration*, satirizing the opponents of a Yankee medical quack. Returning to America in 1804, he published at New York in the following year his virulent attack on Jefferson and other Democratic leaders in *Democracy Unveiled or Tyranny Stripped of the Garb of Patriotism*. After the decline of the Federalists he returned to New England to spend the rest of a useful life as editor of the *New England Farmer* and other periodicals. While at Walpole, Fessenden joined with Tyler and others in satirizing rustic New England speech and manners. "The Country Lovers" (1795) has the additional interest of having perhaps suggested Lowell's "The Courtin'."

Dr. John Shaw (1778-1809) was a Maryland poet and physician, a classmate at St. John's College of Francis Scott Key. After leaving his unfinished medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania for four years of adventure as ship's surgeon in the Mediterranean and elsewhere and obtaining a medical degree at Edinburgh, he settled at Baltimore, where he became a founder and member of the faculty of the College of Medicine of Maryland in 1807. He wrote as a young man a number of graceful lyrics, some of which were published in Dennie's *Port Folio*.

Joseph Hopkinson (1770-1842), son of Francis Hopkinson, was a prominent lawyer, Federalist congressman, and jurist in his native state of Pennsylvania. Talented like his father, he wrote his one successful poem, the patriotic "Hail Columbia" in 1798, for an actor friend who needed a song for a benefit performance. He used the occasion, however, he says, to divert Americans from partisanship for France or England to the thought of their own nationality.

Francis Scott Key (1779-1843) was a lawyer living at Georgetown, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. In the War of 1812, during the bombardment of Fort

McHenry by the British on the night of September 13-14, 1814, Key was detained on a British vessel in the harbor, anxiously awaiting news of the outcome. His joy at seeing the American flag still flying at daybreak stirred him to the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Set to the tune of "To Anacreon in Heaven," a popular English song of the time, it won widespread acclaim and a century later became the official national anthem.

For Mrs. Morton see Emily Pendleton and Milton Ellis, *Phileas. The Life and Works of Sarah Wentworth Morton* (1931). Mrs. Morton's collection, *My Mind and Its Thoughts* (1823), contains some autobiographical material. Brief sketches of her and Fessenden by Milton Ellis may be found in *DAB*. The standard biography of Fessenden is P. G. Perrin, *Life and Works of Thomas Green Fessenden* (1923). John E. Hall prefaced *Poems by the Late Dr. John Shaw* (1810) with a memoir. See also John Rurah, "John Shaw—A Medical Poet of Maryland," in *Annals of Medical History*, Sept., 1921. B. A. Konkle has described the activities of Hopkinson in *Joseph Hopkinson, 1770-1842* (1931). For Hopkinson's and Key's patriotic songs, see O. G. T. Sonneck, *Report on the Star-Spangled Banner, Hail Columbia, America, Yankee Doodle* (1909). For Key, see F. S. K. Smith, *Francis Scott Key, Author of the Star-Spangled Banner* (1911), and "The Star-Spangled Banner," *Current History*, May, 1930.

### THE AFRICAN CHIEF

By Sarah Wentworth Morton

See how the black ship cleaves the main,  
High bounding o'er the dark blue wave,  
Remurmuring with the groans of pain,  
Deep freighted with the princely slave.

Did all the gods of Afric sleep,  
Forgetful of their guardian love,  
When the white tyrants of the deep,  
Betray'd him in the palmy grove?

A chief of Gambia's golden shore,  
Whose arm the band of warriors led, 10  
Or more—the lord of generous power,  
By whom the foodless poor were fed

Does not the voice of reason cry,  
"Claim the first right that nature gave,  
From the red scourge of bondage fly,  
Nor deign to live a burden'd slave?"

Has not his suffering offspring clung,  
Desponding, round his fetter'd knee,  
On his worn shoulder, weeping hung,  
And urged one effort to be free? 20

His wife by nameless wrongs subdued,  
His bosom's friend to death resign'd  
The flinty pathway drench'd in blood,  
He saw with cold and frenzied mind.

Strong in despair, he sought the plain,  
To heaven was raised his steadfast eye,  
Resolved to burst the crushing chain,  
Or 'mid the battle's blast, to die.

First of his race, he led the band,  
Guardless of danger, hurtling round, 30  
Till by his red avenging hand,  
Full many a despot stained the ground.

When erst Messenia's sons oppress'd,  
Flew desperate to the sanguine field,  
With iron clothed each injured breast,  
And saw the cruel Spartan yield,

Did not the soul to heaven allied,  
With the proud heart as greatly swell,  
As when the Roman Decius died,  
Or when the Grecian victim fell? 40

Do later deeds quick rapture raise,  
The boon Batavia's William won,  
Paoli's time-enduring praise,  
Or the yet greater Washington?

If these exalt thy sacred zeal  
To hate oppression's mad control,  
For bleeding Afric learn to feel,  
Whose chieftain claimed a kindred soul.

Oh! mourn the last disastrous hour,  
Lift the full eye of bootless grief, 50  
While victory treads the sultry shore,  
And tears from hope the captive chief.

While the hard race of pallid hue,  
Unpractised in the power to feel,  
Resign him to the murderous crew,  
The horrors of the quivering wheel.

Let sorrow bathe each blushing cheek,  
Bent piteous o'er the tortured slave,  
Whose wrongs compassion cannot speak,  
Whose only refuge was the grave 60

1792

## THE COUNTRY LOVERS

OR

MR. JONATHAN JOLTHEAD'S  
COURTSHIP WITH MISS SALLY SNAPPER  
AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG,  
SAID TO BE WRITTEN BY ITS AUTHOR;  
AND REALLY FOUNDED ON FACT.<sup>1</sup>

By Thomas Green Fessenden

(Tune—"Yankee Doodle")<sup>2</sup>

A MERRY tale I will rehearse,  
As ever you did hear, sir,  
How Jonathan set out, so fierce,  
To see his dearest dear, sir.

(Yankee doodle, keep it up,  
Yankee doodle dandy,  
Mind the music—mind the step,  
And with the girls be handy)

His father gave him *bran* new suit,  
And money, sir, in plenty, 10  
Besides a prancing nag to boot,  
When he was one and twenty.

Moreover, sir, I'd have you know,  
That he had got some knowledge,  
Enough for common use, I trow,  
But had not been to college.

A hundred he could count, 'tis said,  
And in the Bible read, sir,  
And by good Christian parents bred,  
Could even say the creed, sir. 20

One day his mother said to him,  
"My darling son, come here,  
Come fix you up, so neat and trim,  
And go a courting, dear."

"Why, what the deuce does mother want?  
I snigs—I daresn't go;  
I shall get funn'd and then—plague on't—  
Folks will laugh at me so!"

"Phol phol fix up, a courting go,  
To see the deacon's Sarah! 30  
She has a great estate, you know,  
Besides, she wants to marry."

Then Jonathan, in best array,  
Mounted his dappled nag, (sir,)  
But trembled, sadly, all the way  
Lest he should get the bag,<sup>1</sup> (sir.)

He reach'd the house, as people say,  
Not far from eight o'clock, (sir,)  
Moll she holler'd "In, I say,"  
As soon as he did knock, (sir.) 40

He made of bows 'twixt two and three,  
Just as his mother taught him,  
All which were droll enough to see;  
You'd think the cramp had caught him.

Now this was all the manners he,  
From home with him had brought,  
Namely of bows 'twixt two and three,  
The rest he had forgot

At length came in the deacon's Sal  
From milking in the barn, (sir,) 50  
And fath she is as good a gal  
As ever twisted yarn, (sir)

The ladies all, as I should guess,  
And many a lady's man, (sir,)  
Would wish to know about her dress;  
I'll tell them all I can, (sir)

Her wrapper, grey, was not so bad,  
Her apron check'd with blue, (sir,)  
One stocking on one foot she had,  
On t'other foot a shoe, (sir.) 60

<sup>1</sup> he jilted

<sup>1</sup> text of the broadside version, about 1795    <sup>2</sup> Passages in parentheses were inserted in the 1806 version in Fessenden's *Original Poems*



Now Jonathan did scratch his head,  
When first he saw his dear,  
Got up—sat down—and nothing said,  
Because he felt so queer.

(Then talk'd with Sally's brother Joe  
'Bout sheep, and cows, and oxen,  
How wicked folks to church did go,  
With dirty woolen frocks on

(And how a witch, in shape of owl,  
Did steal her neighbor's geese, sir,  
And turkeys too, and other fowl,  
When people did not please her

(And how a man, one dismal night,  
Shot her with a silver bullet,<sup>1</sup>  
And then she flew straight out of sight,  
As fast as she could pull it

(How widow Wunks was sick next day;  
The parson went to view her,  
And saw the very place, they say,  
Where foresaid ball went through her!) 80

Then all the folks went off to bed,  
It seem'd they took the hint,  
But Jonathan was so afraid—  
Sal thought the deuce was in't

At length says Sal, "They're gone, you see,  
And we are left together "  
Says Jonathan, "Indeed—they be—  
'Tis mighty pleasant weather!"

Sal cast a sheep's eye at the dunce,  
Then turn'd towards the fire, 90  
He muster'd courage, all at once,  
And hutch'd a little nigher.

Ye young men all, and lads so smart,  
Who chance to read these verses,  
His next address pray learn by heart,  
To whisper to the lasses.

"Miss Sal, I's going to say, as how,  
We'll *spark* it here tonight,  
I kind of love you, Sal—I vow,  
And mother said I might " 100

"Well done, my man, you've broke the ice,  
And that with little posher;  
Now, Jonathan, take my advice,  
And always mind your mother!"

"Miss Sal, you are the very she,  
If you will love me now,  
That I will marry—then you see,  
You'll have our brindled cow "

("Next Sabbath-day we will be cried,<sup>1</sup>  
And have a 'tarning' wedding, 110  
And lads and lasses take a ride,  
If it should be good sledding.)

"And father's got a great bull calf,  
Which you shall have I vum"—  
"Tell him," says Sal, "he'd best by half  
Keep his bull calves at home "

Now Jonathan felt rather bad,  
He thought she meant to joke him,  
And though he was a spunky lad,  
His courage quite forsook him 120

Sal ask'd him if his heart was whole  
His chin began to quiver,  
He said, he felt so *deuced* droll,  
He guess'd he'd lost his liver!

Now Sal was scar'd out of her wits,  
To see his trepidation,  
She bawl'd, "He's going into fits,"  
And scamper'd like the nation!

A pail of water she did throw,  
All on her trembling lover, 130  
Which wet the lad from top to toe,  
Like drown'd rat all over.

Then Jonathan straight hied him home,  
And since, I've heard him brag, sir,  
That though the jade did wet him some,  
He didn't get the bag, sir!

1795

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lowell's "The Courtin'"

<sup>1</sup> Only a silver bullet could kill a witch or a person bearing a charmed life. Cf. O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*

"An' all I know is they was cried  
In meetin' come nex' Sunday "

## HAIL COLUMBIA

By Joseph Hopkinson

HAIL Columbial happy land!  
 Hail, ye heroes! heaven-born band!  
 Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,  
 Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,  
 And when the storm of war was gone,  
 Enjoyed the peace your valor won.  
 Let independence be our boast,  
 Ever mindful what it cost;  
 Ever grateful for the prize,  
 Let its altar reach the skies

Firm, united, let us be,  
 Rallying round our Liberty;  
 As a band of brothers joined,  
 Peace and safety we shall find.

Immortal patriots! rise once more:  
 Defend your rights, defend your shore  
 Let no rude foe, with impious hand,  
 Let no rude foe, with impious hand,  
 Invade the shrine where sacred lies  
 Of toil and blood the well-earned prize  
 While offering peace sincere and just,  
 In Heaven we place a manly trust,  
 That truth and justice will prevail,  
 And every scheme of bondage fail.

Firm, united, etc

Sound, sound, the trump of Fame!  
 Let WASHINGTON's great name  
 Ring through the world with loud applause,  
 Ring through the world with loud applause,  
 Let every clime to Freedom dear,  
 Listen with a joyful ear  
 With equal skill, and godlike power,  
 He governed in the fearful hour  
 Of horrid war; or guides, with ease,  
 The happier times of honest peace

Firm, united, etc

Behold the chief who now commands,  
 Once more to serve his country, stands—  
 The rock on which the storm will beat;  
 The rock on which the storm will beat  
 But, arm'd in virtue firm and true,  
 His hopes are fix'd on Heaven and you.

When hope was sinking in dismay,  
 And glooms obscured Columbia's day,  
 His steady mind, from changes free,  
 Resolved on death or liberty.

Firm, united, etc.

1798

## SONG

By John Shaw

Who has robbed the ocean cave,  
 To tinge thy lips with coral hue?  
 Who from India's distant wave,  
 For thee those pearly treasures drew?  
 Who, from yonder orient sky,  
 Stole the morning of thine eye?

Thousand charms, thy form to deck,  
 From sea, and earth, and air are torn;  
 Roses bloom upon thy cheek,  
 On thy breath their fragrance borne  
 Guard thy bosom from the day,  
 Lest thy snows should melt away

But one charm remains behind,  
 Which mute earth can ne'er impart;  
 Nor in ocean wilt thou find,  
 Nor in the circling air a heart  
 Fairest! Would'st thou perfect be,  
 Take, oh take that heart from me.

1800

## A SLEIGHING SONG

By John Shaw

When calm is the night, and the stars shine  
 bright,  
 The sleigh glides smooth and cheerily,  
 And mirth and jest abound,  
 While all is still around,  
 Save the horses' trampling sound,  
 And the horse-bells tinkling merrily

But when the drifting snow in the trav'ler's  
 face shall blow,  
 And hail is driving drearily,  
 And the wind is shrill and loud,  
 Then no sleigh shall stir abroad,  
 Nor along the beaten road  
 Shall the horse-bells tinkle merrily.

But to-night the skies are clear, and we have  
not to fear

That the time shall linger wearily;  
For good humor has a charm  
Even winter to disarm,  
And our cloaks shall wrap us warm,  
And the bells shall tinkle merrily.

And whom do I spy, with the sparkling eye,  
And lips that pout so cherrily, 20  
Round her neck the tippet tied,  
Ready in the sleigh to glide?  
Oh! with her I love to ride,  
When the horse-bells tinkle merrily.

c. 1800

### THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

By Francis Scott Key

O SAY, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's  
last gleaming—

Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through  
the clouds of the fight,

O'er the ramparts we watched were so  
gallantly streaming!

And the rocket's red glare, the bombs burst-  
ing in air,

Gave proof through the night that our flag  
was still there,

O! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the  
brave?

On that shore dimly seen through the mists of  
the deep,

Where the foe's haughty host in dread  
silence reposes, 10

What is that which the breeze, o'er the tower-  
ing steep,

As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now dis-  
closes?

Now it catches the gleam of the morning's  
first beam,

In full glory reflected now shines on the  
stream,

'Tis the star-spangled banner; O long may it  
wave

O'er the land of the free, and the home of the  
brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly  
swore

That the havoc of war and the battle's  
confusion

A home and a country should leave us no  
more?

Their blood has washed out their foul foot-  
steps' pollution. 20

No refuge could save the hireling and slave  
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of  
the grave,

And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth  
wave

O'er the land of the free, and the home of the  
brave

Oh thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand  
Between their loved homes and the war's  
desolation!

Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-  
rescued land

Praise the power that hath made and pre-  
served us a nation

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is  
just,

And thus be our motto,—"*In God is our  
trust*". 30

And the star-spangled banner in triumph  
shall wave

O'er the land of the free, and the home of  
the brave.

1814

1815

## 1757 -- Royall Tyler -- 1826

ROYALL TYLER was born in Boston of a rich and influential family much concerned in the events leading to the Revolution, and was the brother of John Steel Tyler, for a time manager of the Federal Street Theatre. He was valedictorian at Harvard in 1776, served in the Revolution, read law, and practiced in Portland, Maine, and other places. Early in 1787 he was concerned in putting down Shays' Rebellion and was sent to New York to arrange for the capture of Shays. There he went to the theater for the first time and saw Sheridan's *School for Scandal*. In the next three weeks he wrote a play, *The Contrast*, and sent it to the American Company for production, on condition that its authorship should be attributed merely to "a citizen of the United States." The play was put on in New York, April 16, 1787, and made an immediate success. Though this first American comedy was inspired by Sheridan and is reminiscent of the late eighteenth-century English comedy of manners, it advocated nationalism and contained in the minor character *Jonathan* a relatively original creation, the first real Yankee to appear in American literature, and the first character to depend in part on dialect for his humor. The point of view is mildly Federalistic.

Tyler wrote two other comedies, now lost, which were acted, *May Day in Town; or New York in an Uproar* (1787) and *The Georgia Spec, or Land in the Moon* (1797). In 1790 he settled in Brattleboro, Vermont, where he collaborated in Joseph Denué's journalistic sketches as "Spondee," in the literary partnership "Colon [Denué] and Spondee"; published a novel, *The Algerine Captive* (1797); and was for many years chief justice of the supreme court of Vermont.

*The Contrast* was printed in 1790, and reprinted in 1887 by the Dunlap Society, with an introduction by Thomas J. McKee, and in 1920 with an introduction and bibliography by Helen Tyler Brown. For biography, see Miss Brown's introduction, based, like most accounts, on an unpublished memoir by Tyler's son, Thomas P. Tyler. See also *Grandmother Tyler's Book: The Recollections of Mary Palmer Tyler, 1775-1866*, by Helen Tyler Brown and Frederick Tupper (1925); G. O. Seilhamer, *History of the American Theatre* (1888-1891), II, 225-239; A. H. Quinn, *History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War* (1923), 64-73; Milton Ellis, *Joseph Denué and His Circle* (1915); and the introductions to *The Contrast* in Quinn's, Moses's, and Halline's collections.

## THE CONTRAST

Tyler's successful play was, as the prologue, title, and theme indicate, nationalistic in spirit, with the purpose of praising American plain manners and morals as compared with the aping of

sophisticated European society as shown in the metamorphosed Dimple and in Charlotte and Letitia. With Sheridan as his model, Tyler submits all his characters to humorous satire, somewhat to the disadvantage of his over-sentimental hero and heroine. Though the audience was

pleased with his plot and theme, the comic actor Wignell "stole the show" in the minor part of the Yankee rustic, Jonathan Tyler, a Harvard-bred Bostonian, was fond of ridiculing the uncouthness of frontier speech and manners as he found them in Maine and in the Connecticut valley, and drew upon his knowledge to such good effect that Jonathan became the ancestor of a long line of stage Yankees. It will be noticed that the back-country New Englander as Tyler knew him was much more like than is generally realized to the swashbuckling Western frontiersman of later story and song.

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

COL. MANLY	CHARLOTTE
DIMPLE	MARIA
VAN ROUGH	LETITIA
JESSAMY	JENNY
JONATHAN	SERVANTS

Scene, NEW YORK

#### PROLOGUE

(Written by a Young Gentleman of New York, and Spoken by Mr Wignell)

EXULT each patriot heart!—this night is shown  
A piece which we may fairly call our own,  
Where the proud titles of "My Lord! Your Grace!"

To humble *Mr.* and plain *Sir* give place  
Our author pictures not from foreign climes  
The fashions, or the follies of the times,  
But has confin'd the subject of his work  
To the gay scenes—the circles of New York  
On native themes his Muse displays her  
pow'rs;

If ours the faults, the virtues too are ours. 10  
Why should our thoughts to distant countries  
roam,  
When each refinement may be found at home?

Who travels now to ape the rich or great,  
To deck an equipage and roll in state;  
To court the graces, or to dance with ease,  
Or by hypocrisy to strive to please?  
Our free-born ancestors such arts despis'd,  
Genuine sincerity alone they priz'd,  
Their minds, with honest emulation fir'd,  
To solid good—not ornament—aspir'd, 20  
Or, if ambition rous'd a bolder flame,  
Stern virtue throve, where indolence was  
shame

But modern youths, with imitative sense,  
Deem taste in dress the proof of excellence,  
And spurn the meanness of your homespun  
arts,  
Since homespun habits would obscure their  
parts,  
Whilst all, which aims at splendor and parade,  
Must come from Europe, and be ready made  
Strange! we should thus our native worth dis-  
claim,

And check the progress of our rising fame 30  
Yet one, whilst imitation bears the sway,  
Aspires to nobler heights, and points the way  
Be rous'd my friends! his bold example view,  
Let your own hearts be proud to copy you!  
Should rigid critics reprobate our play,  
At least the patriotic heart will say,  
"Glorious our fall, since in a noble cause  
The bold attempt alone demands applause."  
Still may the wisdom of the Comic Muse  
Exalt your merits, or your faults accuse 40  
But think not, 'tis her aim to be severe,—  
We all are mortals, and as mortals err  
If candor pleases, we are truly blest,  
Vice trembles, when compell'd to stand con-  
fess'd

Let not light censure on your faults offend,  
Which aims not to expose them, but amend  
Thus does our author to your candor trust,  
Conscious, the free are generous as just

#### ACT FIRST

##### SCENE I. *An Apartment at CHARLOTTE'S*

CHARLOTTE and LETITIA discovered

LETITIA. And so, Charlotte, you really think  
the pocket-hoop unbecoming.

CHARLOTTE. No, I don't say so. It may be  
very becoming to saunter round the house  
of a rainy day, to visit my grandmamma, 10  
or go to Quakers' meeting; but to swim in

a minuet, with the eyes of fifty well-dressed  
beaux upon me, to trip it in the Mall, or  
walk on the battery, give me the luxurious,  
jaunty, flowing, bell-hoop. It would have  
delighted you to have seen me the last eve-  
ning, my charming girl! I was dangling o'er  
the battery with Billy Dimple, a knot of  
young fellows were upon the platform; as  
I passed them I faltered with one of the  
most bewitching false steps you ever saw,  
and then recovered myself with such a

pretty confusion, flinging my hoop to discover a jet black shoe and brilliant buckle. Gad! how my little heart thrilled to hear the confused raptures of—"Demme, Jack, what a delicate foot!" "Ha! General, what a well-turn'd—"

LETITIA. Fiel fie! Charlotte, (*stopping her mouth*) I protest you are quite a libertine.

CHARLOTTE. Why, my dear little prude, are we not all such libertines? Do you think, 10 when I sat tortured two hours under the hands of my friseur, and an hour more at my toilet, that I had any thoughts of my aunt Susan, or my cousin Betsey? though they are both allowed to be critical judges of dress

LETITIA. Why, who should we dress to please, but those who are judges of its merit?

CHARLOTTE. Why a creature who does not know *Buffon* from *soufflee*—Man!—my Letitia—Man! for whom we dress, walk, 20 dance, talk, hiss, languish, and smile. Does not the grave Spectator assure us that even our much bepraised diffidence, modesty, and blushes, are all directed to make ourselves good wives and mothers as fast as we can. Why, I'll undertake with one flirt of this hoop to bring more beaux to my feet in one week than the grave Maria and her sentimental circle can do by sighing senti- 30 ment till their hairs are grey

LETITIA. Well, I won't argue with you, you always out-talk me; let us change the subject. I hear that Mr. Dimple and Maria are soon to be married

CHARLOTTE. You hear true. I was consulted in the choice of the wedding clothes. She is to be married in a delicate white satin, and has a monstrous pretty brocaded lute-string for the second day. It would have 40 done you good to have seen with what an affected indifference the dear sentimentalist turned over a thousand pretty things, just as if her heart did not palpitate with her approaching happiness, and at last made her choice, and arranged her dress with such apathy as if she did not know that plain white satin and a simple blond lace would show her clear skin and dark hair to the greatest advantage.

LETITIA. But they say her indifference to dress,

and even to the gentleman himself, is not entirely affected.

CHARLOTTE. How?

LETITIA. It is whispered, that if Maria gives her hand to Mr. Dimple, it will be without her heart.

CHARLOTTE. Though the giving the heart is one of the last of all laughable considerations in the marriage of a girl of spirit, yet I should like to hear what antiquated notions the dear little piece of old-fashioned prudery has got in her head.

LETITIA. Why you know that old Mr. John-Richard-Robert-Jacob-Isaac-Abraham-Cornelius Van Dimpling, Billy Dimple's father (for he has thought fit to soften his name as well as his manners, during his English tour), was the most intimate friend of Maria's father. The old folks, about a year before Mr. Van Dimpling's death, proposed this match, the young folks were accordingly introduced, and told they must love one another. Billy was then a good-natured, decent, dressing young fellow, with a little dash of the cockcomb, such as our young fellows of fortune usually have. At this time, I really believe, she thought she loved him, and had they then been married, I doubt not they might have jogged on to the end of the chapter, a good kind of sing-song lackadaisical life, as other honest married folks do.

CHARLOTTE. Why did they not then marry?

LETITIA. Upon the death of his father, Billy went to England to see the world and rub off a little of the patroon rust. During his absence, Maria, like a good girl, to keep herself constant to her own true love, avoided company and betook herself, for her amusement, to her books and her dear Billy's letters. But, alas! how many ways has the mischievous demon of inconstancy of stealing into a woman's heart! Her love was destroyed by the very means she took to support it.

CHARLOTTE. How?—Oh! I have it—some likely young beau found the way to her study.

LETITIA. Be patient, Charlotte, your head so runs upon beaux.—Why she read *Sir Charles Grandson*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Shen-*

stone, and the *Sensimental Journey*, and between whiles, as I said, Billy's letters. But as her taste improved, her love declined. The contrast was so striking betwixt the good sense of her books and the flimsiness of her love-letters that she discovered that she had unthinkingly engaged her hand without her heart; and then the whole transaction managed by the old folks now appeared so unsentimental, and looked so like bargaining for a bale of goods that she found she ought to have rejected, according to every rule of romance, even the man of her choice, if imposed upon her in that manner—Clary Harlowe would have scorned such a match.

CHARLOTTE. Well, how was it on Mr. Dimple's return? Did he meet a more favorable reception than his letters?

LETITIA. Much the same. She spoke of him with respect abroad, and with contempt in her closet. She watched his conduct and conversation, and found that he had by travelling acquired the wickedness of Lovelace without his wit, and the politeness of Sir Charles Grandison without his generosity. The ruddy youth who washed his face at the cistern every morning and swore and looked eternal love and constancy, was now metamorphosed into a flippant, pallid, polite beau, who devotes the morning to his toilet, reads a few pages of *Chesterfield's Letters*, and then minces out, to put the infamous principles in practice upon every woman he meets.

CHARLOTTE. But if she is so apt at conjuring up these sentimental bugbears, why does she not discard him at once?

LETITIA. Why, she thinks her word too sacred to be trifled with. Besides, her father, who has a great respect for the memory of his deceased friend, is ever telling her how he shall renew his years in their union, and repeating the dying injunctions of old Van Duffling.

CHARLOTTE. A mighty pretty story! And so you would make me believe that the sensible Maria would give up Duffling Manor, and the all-accomplished Dimple as a husband, for the absurd, ridiculous reason, forsooth, because she despises and abhors

him. Just as if a lady could not be privileged to spend a man's fortune, ride in his carriage, be called after his name, and call him her "own dear-love" when she wants money, without loving and respecting the great he-creature. Oh! my dear girl, you are a monstrous prude.

LETITIA. I don't say what I would do, I only intimate how I suppose she wishes to act.

CHARLOTTE. No, no, no! A fig for sentiment. If she breaks, or wishes to break, with Mr. Dimple, depend upon it, she has some other man in her eye. A woman rarely discards one lover until she is sure of another.—(Letitia little thinks what a clew I have to Dimple's conduct. The generous man submits to render himself disgusting to Maria, in order that she may leave him at liberty to address me I must change the subject.)

(Aside, and rings a bell.)

(Enter SERVANT)

CHARLOTTE. Frank, order the horses to.—Talking of marriage—did you hear that Sally Bloomsbury is going to be married next week to Mr. Indigo, the rich Carolinian?

LETITIA. Sally Bloomsbury married!—Why she is not yet in her teens.

CHARLOTTE. I do not know how that is, but you may depend upon it, 'tis a done affair. I have it from the best authority. There is my Aunt Wyerley's Hannah (you know Hannah—though a black, she is a wench that was never caught in a lie in her life), now Hannah has a brother who courts Sarah, Mrs. Catgut the milliner's girl, and she told Hannah's brother, and Hannah, who, as I said before, is a girl of undoubted veracity, told it directly to me, that Mrs. Catgut was making a new cap for Miss Bloomsbury, which, as it was very dressy, it is very probable is designed for a wedding cap, now, as she is to be married, who can it be to, but to Mr. Indigo? Why, there is no other gentleman that visits at her papa's.

LETITIA. Say not a word more, Charlotte. Your intelligence is so direct and well grounded, it is almost a pity that it is not a piece of scandal.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! I am the pink of prudence.

Though I cannot charge myself with ever having discredited a tea-party by my silence, yet I take care never to report any thing of my acquaintance, especially if it is to their credit,—*discredit*, I mean—until I have searched to the bottom of it. It is true, there is infinite pleasure in this charitable pursuit. Oh! how delicious to go and condole with the friends of some backsliding sister, or to retire with some old dowager or maiden aunt of the family, who love scandal so well that they cannot forbear gratifying their appetite at the expense of the reputation of their nearest relations! And then to return full fraught with a rich collection of circumstances, to retail to the next circle of our acquaintance under the strongest injunctions of secrecy,—ha, ha, ha!—interlarding the melancholy tale with so many doleful shakes of the head, and more doleful, 10  
“Ah! who would have thought it! so amiable, so prudent a young lady, as we all thought her, what a monstrous pity! well, I have nothing to charge myself with, I acted the part of a friend, I warned her of the principles of that rake, I told her what would be the consequence; I told her so, I told her so”—Ha, ha, ha!

LETITIA. Ha, ha, ha! Well, but Charlotte, you don't tell me what you think of Miss 30  
Bloomsbury's match

CHARLOTTE. Think! why I think it is probable she cried for a plaything, and they have given her a husband. Well, well, well, the pining child shall not be deprived of her plaything 'tis only exchanging London dolls for American babies—Apropos of babies, have you heard what Mrs. Affable's high-flying notions of delicacy have come to? 40

LETITIA. Who, she that was Miss Lovely?

CHARLOTTE. The same, she married Bob Affable of Schenectady. Don't you remember?

(Enter SERVANT)

SERVANT. Madam, the carriage is ready.

LETITIA. Shall we go to the stores first, or visiting?

CHARLOTTE. I should think it rather too early to visit; especially Mrs. Prim: you know 50  
she is so particular.

LETITIA. Well, but what of Mrs. Affable?

CHARLOTTE. Oh, I'll tell you as we go; come, come, let us hasten. I hear Mrs. Catgut has some of the prettiest caps arrived you ever saw. I shall die if I have not the first sight of them. (Exit.)

SCENE 2. *A Room in VAN ROUGH's House.*  
MARIA sitting disconsolate at a Table, with Books, etc.

Song

I

The sun sets in night, and the stars shun the day,  
But glory remains when their lights fade away!  
Begin, ye tormentors! your threats are in vain,  
For the son of Alknomook shall never complain

II

Remember the arrows he shot from his bow,  
Remember your chiefs by his hatchet laid low  
Why so slow?—do you wait till I shrink from the pain?  
No—the son of Alknomook will never complain

III

Remember the wood where in ambush we lay;  
And the scalps which we bore from your nation away:  
Now the flame rises fast, you exult in my pain;  
But the son of Alknomook can never complain

IV

I go to the land where my father is gone,  
His ghost shall rejoice in the fame of his son:  
Death comes like a friend, he relieves me from pain;  
And thy son, Oh Alknomook! has scorn'd to complain.

There is something in this song which ever calls forth my affections. The manly virtue of courage, that fortitude which steels the heart against the keenest misfortunes, which interweaves the laurel of glory amidst the instruments of torture and



death, displays something so noble, so exalted, that in despite of the prejudices of education, I cannot but admire it, even in a savage. The prepossession which our sex is supposed to entertain for the character of a soldier, is, I know, a standing piece of railery among the wits. A cockade, a lapelled coat, and a feather, they will tell you, are irresistible to a female heart. Let it be so.—Who is it that considers the helpless situation of our sex, that does not see that we each moment stand in need of a protector, and that a brave one too? Formed of the more delicate materials of nature, endowed only with the softer passions, incapable, from our ignorance of the world, to guard against the wiles of mankind, our security for happiness often depends upon their generosity and courage.—Alas! how little of the former do we find! How inconsistent! that man should be leagued to destroy that honor upon which solely rests his respect and esteem. Ten thousand temptations allure us, ten thousand passions betray us; yet the smallest deviation from the path of rectitude is followed by the contempt and insult of man, and the more remorseless pity of woman, years of penitence and tears cannot wash away the stain, nor a life of virtue obliterate its remembrance. Reputation is the life of woman, yet courage to protect it is masculine and disgusting, and the only safe asylum a woman of delicacy can find is in the arms of a man of honor. How naturally, then, should we love the brave and the generous, how gratefully should we bless the arm raised for our protection, when nerved by virtue, and directed by honor! Heaven grant that the man with whom I may be connected—may be connected!—Whither has my imagination transported me—whither does it now lead me?—Am I not indissolubly engaged by every obligation of honor which my own consent and my father's approbation can give, to a man who can never share my affections, and whom a few days hence it will be criminal for me to disapprove—to disapproval would to heaven that were all—to despise. For, can the most frivolous manners, actuated by

the most depraved heart, meet, or merit, anything but contempt from every woman of delicacy and sentiment?

VAN ROUGH (*without*). Mary!

MARIA. Ha, my father's voice—Sir!—

(*Enter VAN ROUGH*)

VAN ROUGH. What, Mary, always singing doleful ditties, and moping over these plaguy books

MARIA. I hope, Sir, that it is not criminal to improve my mind with books, or to divert my melancholy with singing, at my leisure hours.

VAN ROUGH. Why, I don't know that, child, I don't know that. They used to say when I was a young man, that if a woman knew how to make a pudding, and to keep herself out of fire and water, she knew enough for a wife. Now, what good have these books done you? Have they not made you melancholy, as you call it? Pray, what right has a girl of your age to be in the dumps? Haven't you everything your heart can wish, an't you going to be married to a young man of great fortune, an't you going to have the quirent of twenty miles square?

MARIA. One hundredth part of the land, and a lease for life of the heart of a man I could love, would satisfy me.

VAN ROUGH. Pho, pho, pho, child! nonsense, downright nonsense, child. This comes of your reading your story-books, your *Charles Grandisons*, your *Sentimental Journals*, and your *Robinson Crusoes*, and such other trumpery. No, no, no! child; it is money makes the mare go, keep your eye upon the main chance, Mary

MARIA. Marriage, Sir, is, indeed, a very serious affair.

VAN ROUGH. You are right, child, you are right. I am sure I found it so, to my cost

MARIA. I mean, Sir, that as marriage is a portion for life, and so intimately involves our happiness, we cannot be too considerate in the choice of our companion.

VAN ROUGH. Right, child; very right. A young woman should be very sober when she is making her choice, but when she has

once made it, as you have done, I don't see why she should not be as merry as a grig, I am sure she has reason enough to be so—Solomon says that "there is a time to laugh, and a time to weep"; now a time for a young woman to laugh is when she has made sure of a good rich husband. Now a time to cry, according to you, Mary, is when she is making choice of him but I should think that a young woman's time to cry was 10 when she despaired of *getting* one—Why, there was your mother now, to be sure when I popped the question to her, she did look a little silly, but when she had once looked down on her apronstrings, as all modest young women used to do, and drawled out ye-s, she was as brisk and as merry as a bee  
 MARIA My honored mother, Sir, had no motive to melancholy, she married the man of her choice.

VAN ROUGH The man of her choice! And pray, Mary, an't you going to marry the man of your choice—what trumpery notion is this?—It is these vile books (*throwing them away*). I'd have you to know, Mary, if you won't make young Van Dumping the man of *your* choice, you shall marry him as the man of *my* choice

MARIA You terrify me, Sir Indeed, Sir, I am all submission My will is yours 30

VAN ROUGH. Why, that is the way your mother used to talk "My will is yours, my dear Mr Van Rough, my will is yours" but she took special care to have her own way though for all that.

MARIA Do not reflect upon my mother's memory, Sir—

VAN ROUGH. Why not, Mary, why not? She kept me from speaking my mind all her *life*, and do you think she shall henpeck 40 me now she is *dead* too? Come, come, don't go to sniveling be a good girl, and mind the main chance. I'll see you well settled in the world.

MARIA I do not doubt your love, Sir, and it is my duty to obey you.—I will endeavor to make my duty and inclination go hand in hand.

VAN ROUGH. Well, well, Mary; do you be a good girl, mind the main chance, and never mind inclination.—Why, do you know that

I have been down in the cellar this very morning to examine a pipe of Madeira which I purchased the week you were born, and mean to tap on your wedding day.—That pipe cost me fifty pounds sterling It was well worth sixty pounds; but I overreached Ben Bulkhead, the supercargo I'll tell you the whole story. You must know that—

(Enter SERVANT)

SERVANT. Sir, Mr. Transfer, the broker, is below (Exit)

VAN ROUGH. Well, Mary, I must go.—Remember, and be a good girl, and mind the main chance. (Exit)

MARIA (*Alone*) How deplorable is my situation! How distressing for a daughter to find her heart militating with her filial duty! I know my father loves me tenderly, why then do I reluctantly obey him? Heaven knows with what reluctance I should oppose the will of a parent, or set an example of filial disobedience, at a parent's command I could wed awkwardness and deformity. Were the heart of my husband good, I would so magnify his good qualities with the eye of conjugal affection, that the defects of his person and manners should be lost in the emanation of his virtues At a father's command, I could embrace poverty. Were the poor man my husband, I would learn resignation to my lot, I would enliven our frugal meal with good humor, and chase away misfortune from our cottage with a smile At a father's command I could almost submit to what every female heart knows to be the most mortifying, to marry a weak man, and blush at my husband's folly in every company I visited.—But to marry a depraved wretch, whose only virtue is a polished exterior, who is actuated by the unmanly ambition of conquering the defenceless, whose heart, insensible to the emotions of patriotism, dilates at the plaudits of every unthinking girl, whose laurels are the sighs and tears of the miserable victims of his specious behavior—Can he, who has no regard for the peace and happiness of other families, ever have a due regard for the peace and happiness of his own? Would to heaven

that my father were not so hasty, in his temper! Surely, if I were to state my reasons for declining this match, he would not compel me to marry a man—whom, though my lips may solemnly promise to honor, I find my heart must ever despise.

(Exit.)

## ACT SECOND

### SCENE I

(Enter CHARLOTTE and LETITIA)

CHARLOTTE. (*At entering.*) Betty, take those things out of the carriage and carry them to my chamber; see that you don't tumble them.—My dear, I protest, I think it was the homeliest of the whole. I declare I was almost tempted to return and change it

LETITIA. Why would you take it?

CHARLOTTE. Didn't Mrs. Catgut say it was the most fashionable?

LETITIA. But, my dear, it will never fit be- 20 comingly on you.

CHARLOTTE. I know that; but did not you hear Mrs. Catgut say it was fashionable?

LETITIA. Did you see that sweet airy cap with the white sprig?

CHARLOTTE. Yes, and I longed to take it; but my dear, what could I do?—Did not Mrs. Catgut say it was the most fashionable, and if I had not taken it, was not that awkward gawky, Sally Slender, ready to purchase it 30 immediately?

LETITIA. Did you observe how she tumbled over the things at the next shop, and then went off without purchasing anything, nor even thanking the poor man for his trouble?—But, of all the awkward creatures, did you see Miss Blouze, endeavoring to thrust her unmerciful arm into those small kid gloves?

CHARLOTTE. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

LETITIA. Then did you take notice with what an affected warmth of friendship she and Miss Wasp met, when all their acquaintances know how much pleasure they take in abusing each other in every company?

CHARLOTTE. Lud! Letitia, is that so extraordinary? Why, my dear, I hope you are not going to turn sentimentalist.—Scandal, you know, is but amusing ourselves with

the faults, foibles, follies, and reputations of our friends;—indeed, I don't know why we should have friends, if we are not at liberty to make use of them. But no person is so ignorant of the world as to suppose, because I amuse myself with a lady's faults, that I am obliged to quarrel with her person every time we meet, believe me, my dear, we should have very few acquaintances at that rate

(SERVANT enters and delivers a letter to CHARLOTTE, and exits)

CHARLOTTE. You'll excuse me, my dear

(Opens and reads to herself)

LETITIA. Oh, quite excusable.

CHARLOTTE. As I hope to be married, my brother Henry is in the city.

LETITIA. What, your brother, Colonel Manly?

CHARLOTTE. Yes, my dear; the only brother I have in the world

LETITIA. Was he never in this city?

CHARLOTTE. Never nearer than Harlem Heights, where he lay with his regiment

LETITIA. What sort of a being is this brother of yours? If he is as chatty, as pretty, as sprightly as you, half the belles in the city will be pulling caps for him

CHARLOTTE. My brother is the very counterpart and reverse of me. I am gay, he is grave; I am airy, he is solid, I am ever selecting the most pleasing objects for my laughter, he has a tear for every pitiful one. And thus, whilst he is plucking the briars and thorns from the path of the unfortunate, I am strewing my own path with roses.

LETITIA. My sweet friend, not quite so poetical, and [a] little more particular.

CHARLOTTE. Hands off, Letitia. I feel the rage of simile upon me; I can't talk to you in any other way. My brother has a heart replete with the noblest sentiments, but then, it is like—it is like—Oh! you provoking girl, you have deranged all my ideas—it is like—Oh! I have it—his heart is like an old maiden lady's hand-box; it contains many costly things, arranged with the most scrupulous nicety, yet the misfortune is that they are too delicate, costly, and antiquated for common use.

LETITIA. By what I can pick out of your flowery description, your brother is no beau

CHARLOTTE. No, indeed, he makes no pretension to the character. He'd ride, or rather fly, a hundred miles to relieve a distressed object, or to do a gallant act in the service of his country, but should you drop your fan or bouquet in his presence, it is ten to one that some beau at the farther end of the room would have the honor of presenting it to you before he had observed that it fell. I'll tell you one of his antiquated, anti-gallant notions—He said once in my presence, in a room full of company—would you believe it—in a large circle of ladies, that the best evidence a gentleman could give a young lady of his respect and affection, was, to endeavor in a friendly manner to rectify her foibles. I protest I was crimson to the eyes, upon reflecting that I was known as his sister.

LETITIA. Insupportable creature! tell a lady of her faults! If he is so grave, I fear I have no chance of captivating him.

CHARLOTTE. His conversation is like a rich old-fashioned brocade, it will stand alone, every sentence is a sentiment. Now you may judge what a time I had with him, in my twelve months' visit to my father. He read me such lectures, out of pure brotherly affection, against the extremes of fashion, dress, flirting, and coquetry, and all the other dear things which he knows I dote upon, that, I protest, his conversation made me as melancholy as if I had been at church, and heaven knows, though I never prayed to go there but on one occasion, yet I would have exchanged his conversation for a psalm and a sermon. Church is rather melancholy, to be sure; but then I can ogle the beaux, and be regaled with "Here endeth the first lesson"; but his brotherly *here*, you would think had no end. You captivate him! Why, my dear, he would as soon fall in love with a box of Italian flowers. There is Maria now, if she were not engaged, she might do something—Oh! how I should like to see that pair of penserosos together, looking as grave as two sailors' wives of a stormy night, with a flow of sentiment

meandering through their conversation like purling streams in modern poetry.

LETITIA. Oh! my dear fanciful—

CHARLOTTE. Hush! I hear some person coming through the entry.

(Enter SERVANT)

SERVANT. Madam, there's a gentleman below who calls himself Colonel Manly; do you choose to be at home?

CHARLOTTE. Show him in. (Exit SERVANT.) Now for a sober face.

(Enter COLONEL MANLY)

MANLY. My dear Charlotte, I am happy that I once more enfold you within the arms of fraternal affection. I know you are going to ask (amiable impatience!) how our parents do,—the venerable pair transmit you their blessing by me—they totter on the verge of a well-spent life, and wish only to see their children settled in the world, to depart in peace.

CHARLOTTE. I am very happy to hear that they are well. (Coolly) Brother, will you give me leave to introduce you to our uncle's ward, one of my most intimate friends

MANLY. (Saluting LETITIA.) I ought to regard your friends as my own.

CHARLOTTE. Come, Letitia, do give us a little dash of your vivacity; my brother is so sentimental, and so grave, that I protest he'll give us the vapors.

MANLY. Though sentiment and gravity, I know, are banished the polite world, yet I hoped they might find some countenance in the meeting of such near connections as brother and sister.

CHARLOTTE. Positively, brother, if you go one step further in this strain, you will set me crying, and that, you know, would spoil my eyes, and then I should never get the husband which our good papa and mamma have so kindly wished me—never be established in the world.

MANLY. Forgive me, my sister—I am no enemy to mirth; I love your sprightliness, and I hope it will one day enliven the hours of some worthy man; but when I mention the respectable authors of my existence,—the cherishers and protectors of my helpless

infancy, whose hearts glow with such fondness and attachment that they would willingly lay down their lives for my welfare, you will excuse me if I am so unfashionable as to speak of them with some degree of respect and reverence.

CHARLOTTE Well, well, brother; if you won't be gay, we'll not differ; I will be as grave as you wish. (*Affects gravity.*) And so, brother, you have come to the city to exchange some of your commutation notes for a little pleasure

MANLY Indeed, you are mistaken, my errand is not of amusement, but business; and as I neither drink nor game, my expenses will be so trivial, I shall have no occasion to sell my notes

CHARLOTTE. Then you won't have occasion to do a very good thing. Why, there was the Vermont General—he came down some time since, sold all his musty notes at one stroke, and then laid the cash out in trinkets for his dear Fanny. I want a dozen pretty things myself; have you got the notes with you?

MANLY. I shall be ever willing to contribute as far as it is in my power, to adorn or in any way to please my sister, yet I hope I shall never be obliged for this to sell my notes. I may be romantic, but I preserve them as a sacred deposit. Their full amount is justly due to me, but as embarrassments, the natural consequences of a long war, disable my country from supporting its credit, I shall wait with patience until it is rich enough to discharge them. If that is not in my day, they shall be transmitted as an honorable certificate to posterity, that I have humbly imitated our illustrious WASHINGTON, in having exposed my health and life in the service of my country, without reaping any other reward than the glory of conquering in so arduous a contest.

CHARLOTTE Well said heroics. Why, my dear Henry, you have such a lofty way of saying things, that I protest I almost tremble at the thought of introducing you to the polite circles in the city. The belles would think you were a player run mad, with your head filled with old scraps of tragedy; and as to the beaux, they might admire, because they

would not understand you —But, however, I must, I believe, venture to introduce you to two or three ladies of my acquaintance.

LETITIA. And that will make him acquainted with thirty or forty beaux.

CHARLOTTE. Oh! brother, you don't know what a fund of happiness you have in store.

MANLY. I fear, sister, I have not refinement sufficient to enjoy it

CHARLOTTE. Oh! you cannot fail being pleased

LETITIA. Our ladies are so delicate and dressy

CHARLOTTE And our beaux so dressy and delicate

LETITIA. Our ladies chat and flirt so agreeably

CHARLOTTE And our beaux sumper and bow so gracefully.

LETITIA. With their hair so trim and neat.

CHARLOTTE And their faces so soft and sleek

LETITIA Their buckles so tonish and bright

CHARLOTTE And their hands so slender and white

LETITIA. I vow, Charlotte, we are quite poetical

CHARLOTTE And then, brother, the faces of the beaux are of such a lily-white hue! None of that horrid robustness of constitution, that vulgar corn-fed glow of health, which can only serve to alarm an unmarried lady with apprehensions, and prove a melancholy memento to a married one, that she can never hope for the happiness of being a widow. I will say this to the credit of our city beaux, that such is the delicacy of their complexion, dress, and address, that, even had I no reliance upon the honor of the dear Adonises, I would trust myself in any possible situation with them without the least apprehensions of rudeness.

MANLY Sister Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE Now, now, now brother (*interrupting him*), now don't go to spoil my mirth with a dash of your gravity; I am so glad to see you, I am in tiptop spirits. Oh! that you could be with us at a little snug party. There is Billy Simper, Jack Chaffé, and Colonel Van Titter, Miss Promenade, and the two Miss Tambours, sometimes make a party, with some other ladies, in a side-box at the play. Everything is conducted with such decorum,—first we bow

round to the company in general, then to each one in particular, then we have so many inquiries after each other's health, and we are so happy to meet each other, and it is so many ages since we last had that pleasure, and, if a married lady is in company, we have such a sweet dissertation upon her son Bobby's chun-cough, then the curtain rises, then our sensibility is all awake, and then by the mere force of apprehension, we torture some harmless expression into a double meaning, which the poor author never dreamt of, and then we have recourse to our fans, and then we blush, and then the gentlemen jog one another, peep under the fan, and make the prettiest remarks, and then we giggle and they simper, and they giggle and we simper, and then the curtain drops, and then for nuts and oranges, and then we bow, and it's pray Ma'am take it, and pray Sir keep it, and oh! not for the world, Sir, and then the curtain rises again, and then we blush and giggle and simper and bow all over again. Oh! the sentimental charms of a side-box conversation! (*All laugh.*)

MANLY Well, sister, I join heartily with you in the laugh, for, in my opinion, it is as justifiable to laugh at folly, as it is reprehensible to ridicule misfortune

CHARLOTTE Well, but brother, positively, I can't introduce you in these clothes why, your coat looks as if it were calculated for the vulgar purpose of keeping yourself comfortable

MANLY This coat was my regimental coat in the late war. The public tumults of our state<sup>1</sup> have induced me to buckle on the sword in support of that government which I once fought to establish. I can only say, sister, that there was a time when this coat was respectable, and some people even thought that those men who had endured so many winter campaigns in the service of their country, without bread, clothing, or pay, at least deserved that the poverty of their appearance should not be ridiculed.

CHARLOTTE We agree in opinion entirely, brother, though it would not have done for me to have said it; it is the coat makes the

man respectable. In the time of the war, when we were almost frightened to death, why, your coat was respectable, that is, fashionable; now another kind of coat is fashionable, that is, respectable. And pray direct the tailor to make yours the height of the fashion.

MANLY. Though it is of little consequence to me of what shape my coat is, yet as to the height of the fashion, there you will please to excuse me, sister. You know my sentiments on that subject. I have often lamented the advantage which the French have over us in that particular. In Paris, the fashions have their dawnings, their routine and declensions, and depend as much upon the caprice of the day as in other countries; but there every lady assumes a right to deviate from the general *ton*, as far as will be of advantage to her own appearance. In America, the cry is, What is the fashion? and we follow it, indiscriminately, because it is so.

CHARLOTTE. Therefore it is, that when large hoops are in fashion, we often see many a plump girl lost in the immensity of a hoop petticoat, whose want of height and *embonpoint* would never have been remarked in any other dress. When the high head-dress is the mode, how then do we see a lofty cushion, with a profusion of gauze, feathers, and ribbon, supported by a face no bigger than an apple, whilst a broad full-faced lady, who really would have appeared tolerably handsome in a large head-dress, looks with her smart chapeau as masculine as a soldier.

MANLY But remember, my dear sister, and I wish all my fair countrywomen would recollect, that the only excuse a young lady can have for going extravagantly into a fashion, is, because it makes her look extravagantly handsome—Ladies, I must wish you a good morning.

CHARLOTTE. But, brother, you are going to make home with us.

MANLY. Indeed, I cannot. I have seen my uncle, and explained that matter.

CHARLOTTE. Come and dine with us, then. We have a family dinner about half past four o'clock.

MANLY. I am engaged to dine with the Spanish

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts

ambassador. I was introduced to him by an old brother officer; and instead of freezing me with a cold card of compliment to dine with him ten days hence, he, with the true old Castilian frankness, in a friendly manner asked me to dine with him to-day—an honor I could not refuse. Sister, adieu—Madam, your most obedient— (*Exit.*)

CHARLOTTE I will wait upon you to the door, brother; I have something particular to say to you. (*Exit.*)

LETITIA. (*Alone.*) What a pair!—She the pink of flirtation, he the essence of everything that is *outré* and gloomy.—I think I have completely deceived Charlotte by my manner of speaking of Mr Dimple, she's too much the friend of Maria to be confided in. He is certainly rendering himself disagreeable to Maria, in order to break with her and proffer his hand to me. This is what the delicate fellow hinted in our last conversation. (*Exit.*)

#### SCENE 2. *The Mall*

(*Enter JESSAMY*)

JESSAMY. Positively this Mall is a very pretty place. I hope the city won't ruin it by repairs. To be sure, it won't do to speak of in the same day with Ranelagh or Vauxhall, however, it's a fine place for a young fellow to display his person to advantage. Indeed, nothing is lost here, the girls have taste, and I am very happy to find they have adopted the elegant London fashion of looking back after a genteel fellow like me has passed them. Ah! who comes here? This, by his awkwardness, must be the Yankee colonel's servant. I'll accost him

(*Enter JONATHAN*)

JESSAMY. *Votre très-humble serviteur, Monsieur.* I understand Colonel Manly, the Yankee officer, has the honor of your services

JONATHAN Sir!

JESSAMY. I say, Sir, I understand that Colonel Manly has the honor of having you for a servant

JONATHAN. Servant! Sir, do you take me for a nigger,—I am Colonel Manly's waiter.

JESSAMY. A true Yankee distinction, egad,

without a difference. Why, Sir, do you not perform all the offices of a servant? Do you not even blacken his boots?

JONATHAN. Yes; I do grease them a bit sometimes, but I am a true blue son of liberty, for all that. Father said I should come as Colonel Manly's waiter to see the world, and all that, but no man shall master me. my father has as good a farm as the colonel.

JESSAMY. Well, Sir, we will not quarrel about terms upon the eve of an acquaintance, from which I promise myself so much satisfaction,—therefore *sans ceremonie*—

JONATHAN What?

JESSAMY I say, I am extremely happy to see Colonel Manly's waiter.

JONATHAN Well, and I vow, too, I am pretty considerably glad to see you—but what the dogs need of all this outlandish lingo! Who may you be, Sir, if I may be so bold?

JESSAMY I have the honor to be Mr Dimple's servant, or, if you please, waiter. We lodge under the same roof, and should be glad of the honor of your acquaintance.

JONATHAN You a waiter! By the living jingo, you look so topping, I took you for one of the agents to Congress

JESSAMY. The brute has discernment notwithstanding his appearance—Give me leave to say I wonder then at your familiarity

JONATHAN. Why, as to the matter of that, Mr. — pray, what's your name?

JESSAMY Jessamy, at your service.

JONATHAN. Why, I swear we don't make any great matter of distinction in our state, between quality and other folks.

JESSAMY. This is, indeed, a levelling principle I hope, Mr. Jonathan, you have not taken part with the insurgents.

JONATHAN. Why, since General Shays has sneaked off, and given us the bag to hold, I don't care to give my opinion, but you'll promise not to tell—put your ear this way—you won't tell—I vow, I did think the sturgeons were right.

JESSAMY. I thought, Mr. Jonathan, you Massachusetts men always argued with a gun in your hand—Why didn't you join them?

JONATHAN. Why, the colonel is one of those

folks called the Shim-shin<sup>1</sup>—dang it all, I can't speak them lignum vitae words—you know who I mean—there is a company of them—they wear a China goose at their buttonhole—a kind of gilt thing.—Now the colonel told father and brother,—you must know there are, let me see—there is Elnathan, Silas, and Barnabas, Tabitha,—no, no, she's a she—tarnation, now I have it—there's Elnathan, Silas, Barnabas, Jonathan, that's I—seven of us, six went to the wars, and I stayed at home to take care of mother. Colonel said that it was a burning shame for the true-blue Bunker-hill sons of liberty, who had fought Governor Hutchinson, Lord North, and the Devil, to have any hand in kicking up a cursed dust against a government, which we had every mother's son of us a hand in making.

JESSAMY Bravo!—Well, have you been abroad in the city since your arrival? What have you seen that is curious and entertaining?

JONATHAN Oh! I have seen a power of fine sights. I went to see two marble-stone men and a leaden horse, that stands out of doors in all weathers, and when I came where they was, one had got no head, and t'other weren't there. They said as how the leaden man was a damned tory, and that he took wit in his anger and rode off in the time of the troubles

JESSAMY But this was not the end of your excursion

JONATHAN Oh, no, I went to a place they call Holy Ground. Now I counted this was a place where folks go to meeting, so I put my hymn-book in my pocket, and walked softly and grave as a minister, and when I came there, the dogs a bit of a meeting-house could I see. At last I spied a young gentlewoman standing by one of the seats, which they have here at the doors—I took her to be the deacon's daughter, and she looked so kind, and so obliging, that I thought I would go and ask her the way to lecture, and would you think it—she called me dear, and sweeting, and honey, just as if we were married; by the living jingo, I had a month's mind to buss her

<sup>1</sup> Society of the Cincinnati

JESSAMY. Well, but how did it end?

JONATHAN. Why, as I was standing talking with her, a parcel of sailor men and boys got round me, the snarl headed curs fell a-kicking and cursing of me at such a tarmal rate, that, I vow, I was glad to take to my heels and split home, right off, tail on end like a stream of chalk.

JESSAMY. Why, my dear friend, you are not acquainted with the city, that girl you saw was a ———(*Whispers.*)

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul was that young woman a harlot!—Well, if this is New York Holy Ground, what must the Holy-day Ground be!

JESSAMY Well, you should not judge of the city too rashly. We have a number of elegant fine girls here, that make a man's leisure hours pass very agreeably. I would esteem it an honor to announce you to some of them.—Gad! that announce is a select word; I wonder where I picked it up

JONATHAN. I don't want to know them.

JESSAMY Come, come, my dear friend. I see that I must assume the honor of being the director of your amusements. Nature has given us passions, and youth and opportunity stimulate to gratify them. It is no shame, my dear Blueskin, for a man to amuse himself with a little gallantry.

JONATHAN Girl huntry! I don't altogether understand. I never played at that game. I know how to play hunt the squirrel, but I can't play anything with the girls, I am as good as married.

JESSAMY (Vulgar, horrid brute! Married, and above a hundred miles from his wife, and think that an objection to his making love to every woman he meets! He never can have read, no, he never can have been in a room with a volume of the divine Chesterfield.)—So you are married?

JONATHAN. No, I don't say so; I said I was as good as married, a kind of promise.

JESSAMY. As good as married!—

JONATHAN. Why, yes; there's Tabitha Wyman, the deacon's daughter, at home; she and I have been courting a great while, and folks say as how we are to be married; and so I broke a piece of money with her when we parted, and she promised not to spark it



with Solomon Dyer while I am gone. You wouldn't have me false to my true love, would you?

JESSAMY. May be you have another reason for constancy; possibly the young lady has a fortune? Hal Mr. Jonathan, the solid charms; the chains of love are never so binding as when the links are made of gold.

JONATHAN. Why, as to fortune, I must needs say her father is pretty dumb rich; he went 10 representative for our town last year. He will give her—let me see—four times seven is—seven times four—nought and carry one;—he will give her twenty acres of land—somewhat rocky though—a Bible, and a cow.

JESSAMY. Twenty acres of rock, a Bible, and a cow! Why, my dear Mr. Jonathan, we have servant maids, or, as you would more elegantly express it, waitresses, in this city, 20 who collect more in one year from their mistresses' cast clothes.

JONATHAN. You don't say so!—

JESSAMY. Yes, and I'll introduce you to one of them. There is a little lump of flesh and delicacy that lives at next door, waitress to Miss Maria; we often see her on the stoop.

JONATHAN. But are you sure she would be courted by me?

JESSAMY. Never doubt it; remember a faint 30 heart never—blusters of my tongue—I was going to be guilty of a vile proverb, flat against the authority of Chesterfield—I say there can be no doubt, that the brilliancy of your merit will secure you a favorable reception.

JONATHAN. Well, but what must I say to her?

JESSAMY. Say to her! why, my dear friend, though I admire your profound knowledge on every other subject, yet, you will pardon 40 my saying, that your want of opportunity has made the female heart escape the poignancy of your penetration. Say to her!—Why, when a man goes a-courting, and hopes for success, he must begin with doing, and not saying.

JONATHAN. Well, what must I do?

JESSAMY. Why, when you are introduced you must make five or six elegant bows.

JONATHAN. Six elegant bows! I understand 50 that; six, you say? Well—

JESSAMY. Then you must press and kiss her hand; then press and kiss, and so on to her lips and cheeks; then talk as much as you can about hearts, darts, flames, nectar and ambrosia—the more incoherent the better.

JONATHAN. Well, but suppose she should be angry with I?

JESSAMY. Why, if she should pretend—please to observe, Mr. Jonathan—if she should pretend to be offended, you must—But I'll tell you how my master acted in such a case. He was seated by a young lady of eighteen upon a sofa, plucking with a wanton hand the blooming sweets of youth and beauty. When the lady thought it necessary to check his ardor, she called up a frown upon her lovely face, so irresistibly alluring, that it would have warmed the frozen bosom of age; remember, said she, putting her delicate arm upon his, remember your character. My master instantly dropped upon his knees, with eyes swimming with love, cheeks glowing, and in the gentlest modulation of voice, he said—My dear Caroline, in a few months our hands will be indissolubly united at the altar, our hearts I feel are already so—the favors you now grant as evidence of your affection, are favors indeed, yet when the ceremony is once past, what will now be received with rapture, will then be attributed to duty.

JONATHAN. Well, and what was the consequence?

JESSAMY. The consequence!—Ah! forgive me, my dear friend, but you New England gentlemen have such a laudable curiosity of seeing the bottom of every thing;—why, to be honest, I confess I saw the blooming cherub of a consequence smiling in its angelic mother's arms, about ten months afterwards.

JONATHAN. Well, if I follow all your plans, make them six bows, and all that, shall I have such little cherubim consequences?

JESSAMY. Undoubtedly.—What are you musing upon?

JONATHAN. You say you'll certainly make me acquainted?—Why, I was thinking then how I should contrive to pass this broken piece of silver—won't it buy a sugar-dram? JESSAMY. What is that, the love-token from

the deacon's daughter?—You come on bravely. But I must hasten to my master. Adieu, my dear friend.

JONATHAN. Stay, Mr. Jessamy—must I buss her when I am introduced to her?

JESSAMY. I told you, you must kiss her.

JONATHAN. Well, but must I buss her?

JESSAMY. Why, kiss and buss, and buss and kiss, is all one

JONATHAN. Oh! my dear friend, though you have a profound knowledge of all, a pugnancy<sup>1</sup> of tribulation, you don't know everything (Exit)

JESSAMY (Alone). Well, certainly I improve, my master could not have insinuated himself with more address into the heart of a man he despised—Now will this blundering dog sicken Jenny with nauseous pawings, until she flies into my arms for very ease. How sweet will the contrast be, between the blundering Jonathan, and the courtly and accomplished Jessamy!

### ACT THIRD

#### SCENE I. DIMPLE'S Room

DIMPLE (discovered at a toilet, reading)

"Women have in general but one object, which is their beauty." Very true, my lord, positively very true "Nature has hardly formed a woman ugly enough to be insensible to flattery upon her person" Extremely just, my lord, every day's delightful experience confirms this "If her face is so shocking, that she must, in some degree, be conscious of it, her figure and air, she thinks, make ample amends for it" The sallow Miss Wan is a proof of this.—Upon my telling the distasteful wretch, the other day, that her countenance spoke the pensive language of sentiment, and that Lady Wortley Montague declared, that if the ladies were arrayed in the garb of innocence, the face would be the last part which would be admired as Monsieur Milton expresses it, she grinned horribly a ghastly smile "If her figure is deformed, she thinks her face counterbalances it"

(Enter JESSAMY with letters)

DIMPLE. Where got you these, Jessamy?

<sup>1</sup> probably a repetition of Jessamy's "pugnancy," above

JESSAMY. Sir, the English packet is arrived.

DIMPLE (opens and reads a letter enclosing notes).

"Sir,

I have drawn bills on you in favor of Messrs. Van Cash and Co as per margin I have taken up your note to Col. Piquet, and discharged your debts to my Lord Lurcher and Sir Harry Rook I herewith enclose you copies of the bills, which I have no doubt will be immediately honored. On failure, I shall empower some lawyer in your country to recover the amounts

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN HAZARD."

Now, did not my lord expressly say that it was unbecoming a well-bred man to be in a passion, I confess I should be ruffled (Reads) "There is no accident so unfortunate, which a wise man may not turn to his advantage; nor any accident so fortunate, which a fool will not turn to his disadvantage" True, my lord, but how advantage can be derived from this, I can't see Chesterfield himself, who made, however, the worst practice of the most excellent precepts, was never in so embarrassing a situation I love the person of Charlotte, and it is necessary I should command the fortune of Letitia. As to Maria—I doubt not by my sang-froid behavior I shall compel her to decline the match, but the blame must not fall upon me A prudent man, as my lord says, should take all the credit of a good action to himself and throw the discredit of a bad one upon others. I must break with Maria, marry Letitia, and as for Charlotte—why, Charlotte must be a companion to my wife.—Here, Jessamy!

(Enter JESSAMY, DIMPLE folds and seals two letters.)

DIMPLE. Here, Jessamy, take this letter to my love. (Gives one)

JESSAMY. To which of your honor's loves?—Oh! (reading) to Miss Letitia, your honor's rich love.

DIMPLE. And this (delivers another) to Miss Charlotte Manly. See that you deliver them privately.

JESSAMY. Yes, your honor. (*Going.*)

DIMPLE. Jessamy, who are these strange lodgers that came to the house last night?

JESSAMY. Why, the master is a Yankee colonel; I have not seen much of him, but the man is the most unpolished animal your honor ever disgraced your eyes by looking upon. I have had one of the most *outré* conversations with him!—He really has a most prodigious effect upon my visibility.

DIMPLE. I ought, according to every rule of Chesterfield, to wait on him and insinuate myself into his good graces.—Jessamy, wait on the colonel with my compliments, and if he is disengaged, I will do myself the honor of paying him my respects—Some ignorant unpolished boor—

(JESSAMY goes off and returns.)

JESSAMY. Sir, the colonel is gone out, and Jonathan, his servant, says that he is gone to stretch his legs upon the Mall—Stretch his legs! what an indelicacy of diction!

DIMPLE. Very well. Reach me my hat and sword. I'll accost him there, in my way to Letitia's, as by accident; pretend to be struck with his person and address, and endeavor to steal into his confidence. Jessamy, I have no business for you at present. (*Exit*)

JESSAMY. (*Taking up the book.*) My master and I obtain our knowledge from the same source,—though, gad! I think myself much the prettier fellow of the two (*Surveying himself in the glass.*) That was a brilliant thought, to insinuate that I folded my master's letters for him, the folding is so neat, that it does honor to the operator. I once intended to have insinuated that I wrote his letters too; but that was before I saw them; it won't do now, no honor there, positively.—“Nothing looks more vulgar (*reading affectedly*), ordinary, and illiberal, than ugly, uneven, and ragged nails; the ends of which should be kept even and clean, not tipped with black, and cut in small segments of circles”—Segments of circles! surely my lord did not consider that he wrote for the beaux. Segments of circles! what a crabbed term! Now I dare answer that my master, with all his learning, does not know that this means, according to the present mode, to let the nails grow long, and then cut them

off even at top. (*Laughing without.*) Hal that's Jenny's utter. I protest I despair of ever teaching that girl to laugh; she has something so execrably natural in her laugh, that I declare it absolutely discomposes my nerves. How came she into our house!—(*Calls.*) Jenny!

(*Enter JENNY*)

JESSAMY. Prythee, Jenny, don't spoil your fine face with laughing.

JENNY. Why, mustn't I laugh, Mr. Jessamy?

JESSAMY. You may smile, but, as my lord says, nothing can authorize a laugh.

JENNY. Well, but I can't help laughing—Have you seen him, Mr. Jessamy? Ha, ha, ha!

JESSAMY. Seen whom?

JENNY. Why, Jonathan, the New-England colonel's servant. Do you know he was at the play last night, and the stupid creature don't know where he has been. He would not go to a play for the world, he thinks it was a show, as he calls it.

JESSAMY. As ignorant and unpolished as he is, do you know, Miss Jenny, that I propose to introduce him to the honor of your acquaintance?

JENNY. Introduce him to me! For what?

JESSAMY. Why, my lovely girl, that you may take him under your protection, as Madam Rambouillet did young Stanhope, that you may, by your plastic hand, mould this uncouth cub into a gentleman. He is to make love to you.

JENNY. Make love to me!—

JESSAMY. Yes, Mistress Jenny, make love to you, and, I doubt not, when he shall become domesticated in your kitchen, that this boor, under your auspices, will soon, become *un amiable pour Jonathan*.

JENNY. I must say, Mr. Jessamy, if he copies after me, he will be vastly monstrously polite.

JESSAMY. Stay here one moment, and I will call him.—Jonathan!—Mr. Jonathan!—

(*Calls*)

JONATHAN. (*Wishes.*) Holla! there.—(*Enters.*)

You promise to stand by me—six bows you say.

(*Bows.*)

JESSAMY. Mrs. Jenny, I have the honor of

presenting Mr. Jonathan, Colonel Manly's waiter, to you. I am extremely happy that I have it in my power to make two worthy people acquainted with each other's merit

JENNY. So, Mr. Jonathan, I hear you were at the play last night

JONATHAN. At the play! why, did you think I went to the devil's drawing-room!

JENNY. The devil's drawing-room!

JONATHAN. Yes, why, an't cards and dice the 10  
devil's device, and the playhouse the shop where the devil hangs out the vanities of the world, upon the tenter-hooks of temptation? I believe you have not heard how they were acting the old boy one night, and the wicked one came among them sure enough, and went right off in a storm, and carried one quarter of the playhouse with him. Oh! no, no, no! you won't catch me at a playhouse, I warrant you.

JENNY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, though I don't 20  
scruple your veracity, I have some reasons for believing you were there, pray, where were you about six o'clock?

JONATHAN. Why, I went to see one Mr. Morrison, the *hocus pocus* man, they said as how he could eat a café knife

JENNY. Well, and how did you find the place?

JONATHAN. As I was going about here and 30  
there, to and again, to find it, I saw a great crowd of folks going into a long entry, that had lanterns over the door; so I asked a man, whether that was not the place where they played *hocus pocus*? He was a very civil kind man, though he did speak like the Hessians; he lifted up his eyes and said—"they play *hocus pocus* tricks enough there, Gott knows, mine friend."

JENNY. Well—

JONATHAN. So I went right in, and they showed 40  
me away clean up to the garret, just like meeting-house gallery. And so I saw a power of topping folks, all sitting round in little cabins just like father's corn-crubs—and then there was such a squeaking with the fiddles, and such a ternal blaze with the lights, my head was near turned. At last the people that sat near me set up such a hussing—*huss*—like so many mad cats; and then they went thump, thump, thump, just 50  
like our Peleg threshing wheat, and stamp

away, just like the nation; and called out for one Mr. Langokee,—I suppose he helps act the tricks.

JENNY. Well, and what did you do all this time?

JONATHAN. Gor, I—I liked the fun, and so I thump't away, and hissed as lustily as the best of 'em. One sailor-looking man that sat by me, seeing me stamp, and knowing I was a cute fellow, because I could make a roaring noise, clapt me on the shoulder and said, "You are a d——d hearty cock, smite my timbers!" I told him so I was, but I thought he need not swear so, and make use of such naughty words.

JENNY. The savage!—Well, and did you see the man with his tricks?

JONATHAN. Why, I vow, as I was looking out for him, they lifted up a great green cloth, and let us look right into the next neighbor's house. Have you a good many houses in New York made so in that 'ere way?

JENNY. Not many; but did you see the family?

JONATHAN. Yes, swamp it, I see'd the family. JENNY. Well, and how did you like them?

JONATHAN. Why, I vow they were pretty much like other families,—there was a poor good natured, curse of a husband, and a sad rantpole of a wife

JENNY. But did you see no other folks?

JONATHAN. Yes. There was one youngster, they called him Mr. Joseph; he talked as sober and as pious as a minister; but like some ministers that I know, he was a fly tike in his heart for all that: He was going to ask a young woman to spark it with him, and—the Lord have mercy on my soul!—she was another man's wife.

JESSAMY. The Wabash!

JENNY. And did you see any more folks?

JONATHAN. Why they came on as thick as mustard. For my part, I thought the house was haunted. There was a soldier fellow, who talked about his row de dow dow, and courted a young woman; but of all the cute folk I saw, I liked one little fellow—

JENNY. Ayel who was he?

JONATHAN. Why, he had red hair, and a little round plump face like mine, only not alto-

gether so handsome. His name was Darby:—that was his baptizing name, his other name I forgot. Oh! it was Wag—Wag—Wag—all, Darby Wag—all;—pray, do you know him?—I should like to take a fling with him, or a drap of cider with a pepper-pod in it, to make it warm and comfortable.

JENNY. I can't say I have that pleasure

JONATHAN. I wish you did, he is a cute fellow But there was one thing I didn't like in that Mr. Darby; and that was, he was afraid of some of them 'ere shooting irons, such as your troopers wear on training days. Now, I'm a true born Yankee American son of liberty, and I never was afraid of a gun yet in all my life

JENNY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, you were certainly at the playhouse.

JONATHAN. I at the playhouse!—Why didn't I see the play then?

JENNY. Why, the people you saw were players.

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul did I see the wicked players?—Mayhap that 'ere Darby that I liked so, was the old serpent himself, and had his cloven foot in his pocket. Why, I vow, now I come to think on't, the candles seemed to burn blue, and I am sure where I sat it smelt tarnally of brimstone.

JESSAMY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, from your account, which I confess is very accurate, you must have been at the playhouse

JONATHAN. Why, I vow I began to smell a rat. When I came away, I went to the man for my money again you want your money, says he; yes, says I, for what, says he; why, says I, no man shall jockey me out of my money: I paid my money to see sights and the dogs a bit of a sight have I seen, unless you call listening to people's private business a sight. Why, says he, it is the "School for Scandalization"—Oh, hol no wonder you New York folks are so cute at it, when you go to school to learn it: and so I jogged off.

JESSAMY. My dear Jenny, my master's business drags me from you; would to heaven I knew no other servitude than to your charms.

JONATHAN. Well, but don't go, you won't leave me so.—

JESSAMY. Excuse me. (*Aside to JONATHAN.*)—Remember the cash. (*Exit*)

JENNY. Mr. Jonathan, won't you please to sit down. Mr. Jessamy tells me you wanted to have some conversation with me. (*Having brought forward two chairs, they sit.*)

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. Sir!—

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. Pray, how do you like the city, Sir?

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. I say, Sir, how do you like New York?

JONATHAN. Ma'am!—

JENNY. (*Aside.*) The stupid creature! but I must pass some little time with him, if it is only to endeavor to learn, whether it was his master that made such an abrupt entrance into our house, and my young mistress's heart, this morning—As you don't seem to like to talk, Mr. Jonathan, do you sing?

JONATHAN. (*Aside*) Gor, I—I am glad she asked that, for I forgot what Mr. Jessamy bid me say, and I dare as well be hanged as act what he bid me to, I'm so ashamed—Yes, Ma'am, I can sing—I can sing "Mear," "Old Hundred," and "Bangor"

JENNY. Oh! I don't mean psalm tunes. Have you no little song to please the ladies, such as "Roslin Castle," or "The Maid of the Mill"?

JONATHAN. Why, all my tunes go to meeting tunes, save one, and I count you won't altogether like that 'ere.

JENNY. What is it called?

JONATHAN. I am sure you have heard folks talk about it; it is called "Yankee Doodle."

JENNY. Oh! it is the tune I am fond of; and, if I know anything of my mistress, she would be glad to dance to it. Pray, sing?

JONATHAN. (*Sings.*)

Father and I went to camp,  
Along with Captain Goodwin;  
And there we saw the men and boys  
As thick as hasty pudding.  
Yankee Doodle do, etc.

And there we saw a swamping gun,  
Big as a log of maple,  
On a little deuced cart,  
A load for father's cattle.  
Yankee Doodle do, etc.

And every time they fired it off,  
It took a horn of powder,  
It made a noise—like father's gun,  
Only a nation louder.

Yankee Doodle do, etc

There was a man in our town,  
His name was—

No, no, that won't do Now, if I was with  
Tabitha Wymen and Jemima Cawley, down  
at father Chase's, I shouldn't mind singing  
this all out before them—you would be  
affronted if I was to sing that, though that's  
a lucky thought, if you should be affronted,  
I have something dang'd cute, which Jess-  
samy told me to say to you

JENNY Is that all! I assure you I like it of all  
things

JONATHAN No, no I can sing more some other  
time, when you and I are better acquainted,  
I'll sing the whole of it—no, no—that's a  
fib—I can't sing but a hundred and ninery  
verses our Tabitha at home can sing it all —  
(Sings)

Marblehead's a rocky place,  
And Cape-Cod is sandy,  
Charleston is burnt down,  
Boston is the dandy

Yankee Doodle do, etc

I vow, my own town song has put me in  
such topping spirits, that I believe I'll  
begin to do a little, as Jessamy says we must  
when we go a courting—(Runs and kisses  
her) Burning rivers! cooling flames! red  
hot roses! pig-nuts! hasty-pudding and  
ambrosial

JENNY What means this freedom! you insult-  
ing wretch. (Strikes him.)

JONATHAN Are you affronted?

JENNY. Affronted! with what looks shall I  
express my anger?

JONATHAN. Looks! why, as to the matter of  
looks, you look as cross as a witch.

JENNY. Have you no feeling for the delicacy  
of my sex?

JONATHAN. Feeling! Gor, I—I feel the delicacy  
of your sex pretty smartly (rubbing his  
cheek), though, I vow, I thought when you  
city ladies courted and married, and all that,  
you put feeling out of the question. But I  
want to know whether you are really af-

fronted, or only pretend to be so? 'Cause, if  
you are certainly right down affronted, I  
am at the end of my tether—Jessamy didn't  
tell me what to say to you.

JENNY. Pretend to be affronted!

JONATHAN. Aye, aye, if you only pretend, you  
shall hear how I'll go to work to make  
cherubim consequences. (Runs up to her.)

JENNY. Begone, you brute!

JONATHAN. That looks like mad, but I won't  
lose my speech. My dearest Jenny—your  
name is Jenny, I think? My dearest Jenny,  
though I have the highest esteem for the  
sweet favors you have just now granted  
me—Gor, that's a fib though, but Jessamy  
says it is not wicked to tell lies to the women  
(Aside) I say, though I have the highest  
esteem for the favors you have just now  
granted me, yet, you will consider, that as  
soon as the dissolvable knot is tied, they will  
no longer be favors, but only matters of  
duty, and matters of course.

JENNY Marry you! you audacious monster!  
get out of my sight, or rather let me fly  
from you (Exit hastily)

JONATHAN. Gor! she's gone off in a swinging  
passion, before I had time to think of con-  
sequences If this is the way with your city  
ladies, give me the twenty acres of rock,  
the Bible, the cow, and Tabitha, and a little  
peaceable bundling

## SCENE 2 The Mall

(Enter MANLY)

MANLY It must be so, Montague! and it is not  
all the tribe of Mandevilles shall convince  
me, that a nation, to become great, must  
first become dissipated Luxury is surely the  
bane of a nation. Luxury! which enervates  
both soul and body, by opening a thousand  
new sources of enjoyment, opens also a  
thousand new sources of contention and  
want. Luxury! which renders a people weak  
at home, and accessible to bribery, corrup-  
tion, and force from abroad. When the  
Grecian states knew no other tools than the  
axe and the saw, the Grecians were a great, a  
free, and a happy people. The kings of  
Greece devoted their lives to the service of  
their country, and her senators knew no other

superiority over their fellow-citizens than a glorious pre-eminence in danger and virtue. They exhibited to the world a noble spectacle,—a number of independent states united by a similarity of language, sentiment, manners, common interest, and common consent, in one grand mutual league of protection.—And, thus united, long might they have continued the cherishers of arts and sciences, the protectors of the oppressed, 10 the scourge of tyrants, and the safe asylum of liberty. But when foreign gold, and still more pernicious, foreign luxury, had crept among them, they sapped the vitals of their virtue. The virtues of their ancestors were only found in their writings. Envy and suspicion, the vices of little minds, possessed them. The various states engendered jealousies of each other, and, more unfortunately, growing jealous of their great federal 20 council, the Amphictyons, they forgot that their common safety had existed, and would exist, in giving them an honorable extensive prerogative. The common good was lost in the pursuit of private interest, and that people who, by uniting, might have stood against the world in arms, by dividing, crumbled into ruin,—their name is now only known in the page of the historian, and what they once were, is all we have 30 left to admire. Oh! that America! Oh! that my country, would in this her day learn the things which belong to her people!

(Enter DIMPLE)

DIMPLE. You are Colonel Manly, I presume?

MANLY. At your service, Sir.

DIMPLE. My name is Dimple, Sir. I have the honor to be a lodger in the same house with you, and hearing you were in the Mall, 40 came hither to take the liberty of joining you.

MANLY. You are very obliging, Sir.

DIMPLE. As I understand you are a stranger here, Sir, I have taken the liberty to introduce myself to your acquaintance, as possibly I may have it in my power to point out some things in this city worthy your notice.

MANLY. An attention to strangers is worthy a liberal mind and must ever be gratefully 50 received. But to a soldier, who has no fixed

abode, such attentions are particularly pleasing.

DIMPLE. Sir, there is no character so respectable as that of a soldier. And, indeed, when we reflect how much we owe to those brave men who have suffered so much in the service of their country and secured to us those inestimable blessings that we now enjoy, our liberty and independence, they demand every attention which gratitude can pay. For my own part, I never meet an officer, but I embrace him as my friend, nor a private in distress, but I insensibly extend my charity to him.—(Aside.) I have hit the bumpkin off very tolerably.

MANLY. Give me your hand, Sir! I do not proffer this hand to everybody, but you steal into my heart. I hope I am as insensible to flattery as most men, but I declare (it may be my weak side) that I never hear the name of soldier mentioned with respect but I experience a thrill of pleasure which I never feel on any other occasion.

DIMPLE. Will you give me leave, my dear Colonel, to confer an obligation on myself by showing you some civilities during your stay here, and giving a similar opportunity to some of my friends?

MANLY. Sir, I thank you, but I believe my stay in this city will be very short.

DIMPLE. I can introduce you to some men of excellent sense, in whose company you will esteem yourself happy, and, by way of amusement, to some fine girls who will listen to your soft things with pleasure.

MANLY. Sir, I should be proud of the honor of being acquainted with those gentlemen, —but, as for the ladies, I don't understand you.

DIMPLE. Why, Sir, I need not tell you, that when a young gentleman is alone with a young lady, he must say some soft things to her fair cheek—indeed the lady will expect it. To be sure, there is not much pleasure when a man of the world and a finished coquette meet, who perfectly know each other, but how delicious is it to excite the emotions of joy, hope, expectation, and delight, in the bosom of a lovely girl who believes every tittle of what you say to be serious!

MANLY. Serious, Sir! In my opinion, the man who, under pretensions of marriage, can plant thorns in the bosom of an innocent, unsuspecting girl, is more detestable than a common robber, in the same proportion, as private violence is more despicable than open force, and money of less value than happiness

DIMPLE. (*Aside.*) How he awes me by the superiority of his sentiments.—As you say, Sir, a gentleman should be cautious how he mentions marriage. 10

MANLY. Cautious, Sir! No person more approves of an intercourse between the sexes than I do. Female conversation softens our manners, whilst our discourse, from the superiority of our literary advantages, improves their minds. But in our young country, where there is no such thing as gallantry, when a gentleman speaks of love to a lady, whether he mentions marriage or not, she ought to conclude either that he meant to insult her or that his intentions are the most serious and honorable. How mean, how cruel, is it, by a thousand tender assiduities, to win the affections of an amiable girl and, though you leave her virtue unspotted, to betray her into the appearance of so many tender partialities that every man of delicacy would suppress his inclination towards her by supposing her heart engaged! Can any man, for the trivial gratification of his leisure hours, affect the happiness of a whole life! His not having spoken of marriage may add to his perfidy, but can be no excuse for his conduct. 20

DIMPLE. Sir, I admire your sentiments—they are mine. The light observations that fell from me were only a principle of the tongue, they came not from the heart—my practice has ever disapproved these principles. 40

MANLY. I believe you, Sir. I should with reluctance suppose that those pernicious sentiments could find admittance into the heart of a gentleman

DIMPLE. I am now, Sir, going to visit a family where, if you please, I will have the honor of introducing you. Mr. Manly's ward, Miss Letitia, is a young lady of immense fortune; and his niece, Miss Charlotte Manly, is a young lady of great sprightliness and beauty. 50

MANLY. That gentleman, Sir, is my uncle, and Miss Manly my sister.

DIMPLE. (*Aside.*) The devil she is!—Miss Manly your sister, Sir? I rejoice to hear it, and feel a double pleasure in being known to you.—(*Aside.*) Plague on him! I wish he was at Boston again with all my soul.

MANLY. Come, Sir, will you go?

DIMPLE. I will follow you in a moment, Sir. (*Exit MANLY.*) Plague on it! this is unlucky. A fighting brother is a cursed appendage to a fine girl. Egad! I just stopped in time; had he not discovered himself, in two minutes more I should have told him how well I was with his sister—Indeed, I cannot see the satisfaction of an intrigue, if one can't have the pleasure of communicating it to our friends. (*Exit.*)

#### ACT FOURTH

##### SCENE I. CHARLOTTE'S Apartment

(CHARLOTTE leading in MARIA)

CHARLOTTE. This is so kind, my sweet friend, to come to see me at this moment. I declare, if I were going to be married in a few days, as you are, I should scarce have found time to visit my friends.

MARIA. Do you think then that there is an impropriety in it?—How should you dispose of your time? 30

CHARLOTTE. Why, I should be shut up in my chamber; and my head would so run upon—upon—upon the solemn ceremony that I was to pass through—I declare it would take me above two hours merely to learn that little monosyllable—*Yes.* Ah! my dear, your sentimental imagination does not conceive what that little tiny word implies.

MARIA. Spare me your railery, my sweet friend; I should love your agreeable vivacity at any other time.

CHARLOTTE. Why this is the very time to amuse you. You grieve me to see you look so unhappy.

MARIA. Have I not reason to look so?

CHARLOTTE. What new grief distresses you?

MARIA. Oh! how sweet it is, when the heart is borne down with misfortune, to recline and repose on the bosom of friendship! Heaven



knows, that, although it is improper for a young lady to praise a gentleman, yet I have ever concealed Mr. Dimple's foibles, and spoken of him as of one whose reputation I expected would be linked with mine but his late conduct towards me has turned my coolness into contempt. He behaves as if he meant to insult and disgust me, whilst my father, in the last conversation on the subject of our marriage, spoke of it as a matter which lay near his heart, and in which he would not bear contradiction.

CHARLOTTE. This works well oh! the generous Dimple. I'll endeavor to excite her to discharge him. (*Aside*)—But, my dear friend, your happiness depends on yourself—Why don't you discard him? Though the match has been of long standing, I would not be forced to make myself miserable, no parent in the world should oblige me to marry the man I did not like

MARIA. Oh! my dear, you never lived with your parents, and do not know what influence a father's frowns have upon a daughter's heart. Besides, what have I to allege against Mr. Dimple, to justify myself to the world? He carries himself so smoothly that every one would impute the blame to me, and call me capricious.

CHARLOTTE. And call her capricious! Did ever such an objection start into the heart of woman? For my part, I wish I had fifty lovers to discard, for no other reason than because I did not fancy them. My dear Maria, you will forgive me, I know your candor and confidence in me, but I have at times, I confess, been led to suppose that some other gentleman was the cause of your aversion to Mr. Dimple

MARIA. No, my sweet friend, you may be assured that though I have seen many gentlemen I could prefer to Mr. Dimple, yet I never saw one that I thought I could give my hand to, until this morning

CHARLOTTE. This morning!

MARIA. Yes,—one of the strangest accidents in the world. The odious Dimple, after disgusting me with his conversation, had just left me, when a gentleman who, it seems, boards in the same house with him, saw him coming out of our door, and the houses

looking very much alike, he came into our house instead of his lodgings; nor did he discover his mistake until he got into the parlor, where I was: he then bowed so gracefully; made such a genteel apology, and looked so manly and noble!

CHARLOTTE. I see some folks, though it is so great an impropriety, can praise a gentleman, when he happens to be the man of their fancy. (*Aside*)

MARIA. I don't know how it was,—I hope he did not think me indelicate—but I asked him, I believe, to sit down, or pointed to a chair. He sat down, and instead of having recourse to observations upon the weather, or hackneyed criticisms upon the theater, he entered readily into a conversation worthy a man of sense to speak, and a lady of delicacy and sentiment to hear. He was not strictly handsome, but he spoke the language of sentiment, and his eyes looked tenderness and honor

CHARLOTTE. Oh! (*eagerly*) you sentimental grave girls, when your hearts are once touched, beat us rattles a bar's length. And so, you are quite in love with this angel?

MARIA. In love with him! How can you rattle so, Charlotte? Am I not going to be miserable? (*Sighs*) In love with a gentleman I never saw but one hour in my life, and don't know his name!—No, I only wished that the man I shall marry may look, and talk, and act, just like him. Besides, my dear, he is a married man

CHARLOTTE. Why, that was good natured—He told you so, I suppose, in mere charity, to prevent your falling in love with him?

MARIA. He didn't tell me so (*peevishly*), he looked as if he was married

CHARLOTTE. How, my dear, did he look sheepish?

MARIA. I am sure he has a susceptible heart, and the ladies of his acquaintance must be very stupid not to—

CHARLOTTE. Hush! I hear some person coming.

(*Enter LETITIA*)

LETITIA. My dear Maria, I am happy to see you. Lud! what a pity it is that you have purchased your wedding clothes.

MARIA. I think so. (*Sighing.*)

LETITIA. Why, my dear, there is the sweetest parcel of silks come over you ever saw Nancy Brilliant has a full suit come; she sent over her measure, and it fits her to a hair; it is immensely dressy, and made for a court-hoop. I thought they said the large hoops were going out of fashion.

CHARLOTTE. Did you see the hat?—Is it a fact, that the deep laces round the border is still the fashion?

DIMPLE. (*Within*) Upon my honor, Sir!

MARIA. Hal Dimple's voice! My dear, I must take leave of you. There are some things necessary to be done at our house—Can't I go through the other room?

(*Enter DIMPLE and MANLY*)

DIMPLE. Ladies, your most obedient

CHARLOTTE. Miss Van Rough, shall I present my brother Henry to you? Colonel Manly, Maria,—Miss Van Rough, brother

MARIA. Her brother! (*Turns and sees MANLY*) Oh! my heart! The very gentleman I have been praising

MANLY. The same amiable girl I saw this morning!

CHARLOTTE. Why, you look as if you were acquainted

MANLY. I unintentionally intruded into this lady's presence this morning, for which she was so good as to promise me her forgiveness

CHARLOTTE. Oh! ho! is that the case! Have these two penserosos been together? Were they Henry's eyes that looked so tenderly? (*Aside*)—And so you promised to pardon him? and could you be so good natured?—have you really forgiven him? I beg you would do it for my sake (*Whispering loud to MARIA.*)—But, my dear, as you are in such haste, it would be cruel to detain you; I can show you the way through the other room.

MARIA. Spare me, my sprightly friend.

MANLY. The lady does not, I hope, intend to deprive us of the pleasure of her company so soon.

CHARLOTTE. She has only a mantua-maker who waits for her at home. But as I am to give my opinion of the dress, I think she

cannot go yet. We were talking of the fashions when you came in; but I suppose the subject must be changed to something of more importance now.—Mr Dimple, will you favor us with an account of the public entertainments?

DIMPLE. Why, really, Miss Manly, you could not have asked me a question more *mal-apropos*. For my part, I must confess that, to a man who has travelled, there is nothing that is worthy the name of amusement to be found in this city.

CHARLOTTE. Except visiting the ladies.

DIMPLE. Pardon me, Madam, that is the avocation of a man of taste. But for amusement, I positively know of nothing that can be called so, unless you dignify with that title the hopping once a fortnight to the sound of two or three squeaking fiddles, and the clattering of the old tavern windows, or sitting to see the miserable mummers whom you call actors, murder comedy and make a farce of tragedy

MANLY. Do you never attend the theater, Sir?

DIMPLE. I was tortured there once

CHARLOTTE. Pray, Mr. Dimple, was it a tragedy or a comedy?

DIMPLE. Faith, Madam, I cannot tell, for I sat with my back to the stage all the time, admiring a much better actress than any there—a lady who played the fine woman to perfection;—though, by the laugh of the horrid creatures around me, I suppose it was comedy. Yet, on second thoughts, it might be some hero in a tragedy, dying so comically as to set the whole house in an uproar.—Colonel, I presume you have been in Europe?

MANLY. Indeed, Sir, I was never ten leagues from the continent

DIMPLE. Believe me, Colonel, you have an immense pleasure to come; and when you shall have seen the brilliant exhibitions of Europe, you will learn to despise the amusements of this country as much as I do.

MANLY. Therefore I do not wish to see them; for I can never esteem that knowledge valuable, which tends to give me a distaste for my native country.

DIMPLE. Well, Colonel, though you have not travelled, you have read.

MANLY. I have, a little, and by it have discovered that there is a laudable partiality which ignorant, untravelled men entertain for everything that belongs to their native country. I call it laudable—it injures no one, adds to their own happiness; and, when extended, becomes the noble principle of patriotism. Travelled gentlemen rise superior, in their own opinion, to this, but if the contempt which they contract for their country is the most valuable acquisition of their travels, I am far from thinking that their time and money are well spent.

MARIA. What noble sentiments!

CHARLOTTE. Let my brother set out from where he will in the fields of conversation, he is sure to end his tour in the temple of gravity.

MANLY. Forgive me, my sister. I love my country, it has its foibles undoubtedly—some foreigners will with pleasure remark them—but such remarks fall very ungracefully from the lips of her citizens.

DIMPLE. You are perfectly in the right, Colonel—America has her faults.

MANLY. Yes, Sir; and we, her children, should blush for them in private and endeavor, as individuals, to reform them. But if our country has its errors in common with other countries, I am proud to say America, I mean the United States, have displayed virtues and achievements which modern nations may admire, but of which they have seldom set us the example.

CHARLOTTE. But brother, we must introduce you to some of our gay folks, and let you see the city, such as it is. Mr Dimple is known to almost every family in town—he will doubtless take a pleasure in introducing you.

DIMPLE. I shall esteem every service I can render your brother an honor.

MANLY. I fear the business I am upon will take up all my time, and my family will be anxious to hear from me.

MARIA. His family! But what is it to me that he is married! (*Aside.*)—Pray, how did you leave your lady, Sir?

CHARLOTTE. My brother is not married (*observing her anxiety*), it is only an odd way he has of expressing himself.—Pray,

brother, is this business, which you make your continual excuse, a secret?

MANLY. No, sister: I came hither to solicit the honorable Congress that a number of my brave old soldiers may be put upon the pension-list, who were, at first, not judged to be so materially wounded as to need the public assistance.—My sister says true: (*To MARIA.*) I call my late soldiers my family—Those who were not in the field in the late glorious contest, and those who were, have their respective merits; but I confess, my old brother-soldiers are dearer to me than the former description. Friendships made in adversity are lasting, our countrymen may forget us, but that is no reason why we should forget one another. But I must leave you, my time of engagement approaches.

CHARLOTTE. Well, but brother, if you will go, will you please to conduct my fair friend home? You live in the same street—I was to have gone with her myself—(*Aside*) A lucky thought.

MARIA. I am obliged to your sister, Sir, and was just intending to go (*Going*)

MANLY. I shall attend her with pleasure.

(*Exit with MARIA, followed by DIMPLE and CHARLOTTE*)

MARIA. Now, pray don't betray me to your brother.

CHARLOTTE (*Just as she sees him make a motion to take his leave*) One word with you, brother, if you please

(*Follows them out*)

(*Manent DIMPLE and LETITIA*)

DIMPLE. You received the billet I sent you, I presume?

LETITIA. Hush!—Yes.

DIMPLE. When shall I pay my respects to you?

LETITIA. At eight I shall be unengaged.

(*Re-enter CHARLOTTE*)

DIMPLE. (*To CHARLOTTE.*) Did my lovely angel receive my billet?

CHARLOTTE. Yes.

DIMPLE. What hour shall I expect with impatience?

CHARLOTTE. At eight I shall be at home, unengaged.

DIMPLE. Unfortunate! I have a horrid engage-

ment of business at that hour.—Can't you finish your visit earlier and let six be the happy hour?

CHARLOTTE. You know your influence over me.  
(*Exeunt severally.*)

SCENE 2. VAN ROUGH's House

(VAN ROUGH, alone)

It cannot possibly be true! The son of my old friend can't have acted so unadvisedly 10  
Seventeen thousand pounds! in bills!—Mr Transfer must have been mistaken. He always appeared so prudent, and talked so well upon money-matters, and even assured me that he intended to change his dress for a suit of clothes which would not cost so much, and look more substantial, as soon as he married. No, no, no! it can't be, it cannot be.—But however, I must 20  
look out sharp. I did not care what his principles or his actions were, so long as he minded the main chance. Seventeen thousand pounds!—If he had lost it in trade, why the best men may have ill-luck, but to game it away, as Transfer says—why, at this rate, his whole estate may go in one night, and, what is ten times worse, mine into the bargain. No, no; Mary is right. Leave women to look out in these matters; 30  
for all they look as if they didn't know a journal from a ledger, when their interest is concerned, they know what's what, they mind the main chance as well as the best of us.—I wonder Mary did not tell me she knew of his spending his money so foolishly. Seventeen thousand pounds! Why, if my daughter was standing up to be married, I would forbid the banns, if I found it was to a man who did not mind the main 40  
chance.—Hush! I hear somebody coming. 'Tis Mary's voice: a man with her tool I shouldn't be surprised if this should be the other string to her bow—Aye, aye, let them alone; women understand the main chance.—Though, i' faith, I'll listen a little  
(*Returns into a closet.*)

(MANLY leading in MARIA)

MANLY. I hope you will excuse my speaking 50  
upon so important a subject, so abruptly;

but the moment I entered your room, you struck me as the lady whom I had long loved in imagination and never hoped to see.

MARIA. Indeed, Sir, I have been led to hear more upon this subject than I ought.

MANLY. Do you then disapprove my suit, Madam, or the abruptness of my introducing it? If the latter, my peculiar situation, being obliged to leave the city in a few days, will, I hope, be my excuse, if the former, I will retire, for I am sure I would not give a moment's inquietude to her whom I could devote my life to please. I am not so indelicate as to seek your immediate approbation, permit me only to be near you, and by a thousand tender assiduities to endeavor to excite a grateful return.

MARIA. I have a father whom I would die to make happy—he will disapprove—

MANLY. Do you think me so ungenerous as to seek a place in your esteem without his consent? You must—you ever ought to consider that man as unworthy of you, who seeks an interest in your heart contrary to a father's approbation. A young lady should reflect that the loss of a lover may be supplied, but nothing can compensate for the loss of a parent's affection. Yet, why do you suppose your father would disapprove? In our country, the affections are not sacrificed to riches or family aggrandizement.—should you approve, my family is decent, and my rank honorable

MARIA. You distress me, Sir

MANLY. Then I will sincerely beg your excuse for obtruding so disagreeable a subject and retire.  
(*Going*)

MARIA. Stay, Sir! your generosity and good opinion of me deserve a return; but why must I declare what, for these few hours, I have scarce suffered myself to think?—I am—

MANLY. What?

MARIA. Engaged, Sir—and, in a few days, to be married to the gentleman you saw at your sister's.

MANLY. Engaged to be married! And have I been basely invading the rights of another? Why have you permitted this?—Is this the return for the partiality I declared for you?

MARIA. You distress me, Sir. What would you have me say? You are too generous to wish the truth: ought I to say that I dared not suffer myself to think of my engagement, and that I am going to give my hand without my heart?—Would you have me confess a partiality for you? If so, your triumph is complete, and can be only more so when days of misery with the man I cannot love will make me think of him whom I could 10 prefer.

MANLY. (*After a pause*) We are both unhappy; but it is your duty to obey your parent,—mine to obey my honor. Let us, therefore, both follow the path of rectitude, and of this we may be assured, that if we are not happy, we shall, at least, deserve to be so. Adieu! I dare not trust myself longer with you

(*Exeunt severally*) 20

## ACT FIFTH

### SCENE 1. DIMPLE'S Lodgings

#### JESSAMY meeting JONATHAN

JESSAMY. Well, Mr. Jonathan, what success with the fair?

JONATHAN. Why, such a tarnal cross like you never saw!—You would have counted she 30 had lived upon crab-apples and vinegar for a fortnight. But what the rattle makes you look so tarnation glum?

JESSAMY I was thinking, Mr Jonathan, what could be the reason of her carrying herself so coolly to you.

JONATHAN. Coolly, do you call it? Why, I vow, she was fire-hot angry may be it was because I buss'd her.

JESSAMY No, no, Mr. Jonathan, there must 40 be some other cause. I never yet knew a lady angry at being kissed.

JONATHAN Well, if it is not the young woman's bashfulness, I vow I can't conceive why she shouldn't like me.

JESSAMY. May be it is because you have not the graces, Mr. Jonathan.

JONATHAN. Grace! Why, does the young woman expect I must be converted before I court her?

JESSAMY. I mean graces of person; for instance,

my lord tells us that we must cut off our nails even at top, in small segments of circles;—though you won't understand that —In the next place, you must regulate your laugh.

JONATHAN. Maple-log seize it! don't I laugh natural?

JESSAMY. That's the very fault, Mr Jonathan. Besides, you absolutely misplace it. I was told by a friend of mine that you laughed outright at the play the other night, when you ought only to have tittered

JONATHAN. Gor! I—what does one go to see fun for if they can't laugh?

JESSAMY. You may laugh—but you must laugh by rule

JONATHAN. Swamp it—laugh by rule! Well, I should like that tarnally.

JESSAMY. Why you know, Mr. Jonathan, that to dance, a lady to play with her fan, or a gentleman with his cane, and all other natural motions, are regulated by art. My master has composed an immensely pretty gamut, by which any lady, or gentleman, with a few years' close application, may learn to laugh as gracefully as if they were born and bred to it.

JONATHAN. Mercy on my soul! A gamut for laughing—just like fa, la, so?

JESSAMY. Yes. It comprises every possible display of jocularly, from an *affettuoso* smile to a *piano* titter, or full chorus *fortissimo* ha, ha, ha! My master employs his leisure hours in marking out the plays, like a cathedral chanting-book, that the ignorant may know where to laugh, and that pit, box, and gallery may keep time together, and not have a snigger in one part of the house, a broad grin in the other, and a d—d grum look in the third. How delightful to see the audience all smile together, then look on their books, then twist their mouths into an agreeable smug, then altogether shake the house with a general ha, ha, ha! loud as a full chorus of Handel's, at an Abbey-com-memoration.

JONATHAN. Ha, ha, ha! that's dang'd cute, I swear.

JESSAMY. The gentlemen, you see, will laugh the tenor; the ladies will play the counter-tenor; the beaux will squeak the treble; and

our jolly friends in the gallery a thorough  
bass, ho, ho, hol

JONATHAN. Well, can't you let me see that  
gamut?

JESSAMY. Oh! yes, Mr. Jonathan; here it is.  
(*Takes out a book.*) Oh! no, this is only a  
titter with its variations. Ah, here it is.  
(*Takes out another*) Now you must know,  
Mr. Jonathan, this is a piece written by Ben  
Jonson, which I have set to my master's 10  
gamut. The places where you must smile,  
look grave, or laugh outright, are marked  
below the line. Now look over me.—  
"There was a certain man"—now you must  
smile.

JONATHAN. Well, read it again; I warrant I'll  
mind my eye.

JESSAMY. "There was a certain man, who had  
a sad scolding wife,"—now you must laugh.

JONATHAN. Tarnation! That's no laughing 20  
matter, though.

JESSAMY. "And she lay sick a-dying";—now  
you must titter

JONATHAN. What, snigger when the good  
woman's a-dying! Gor, I—

JESSAMY. Yes, the notes say you must—"And  
she asked her husband leave to make a  
will,"—now you must begin to look grave,  
—"and her husband said"—

JONATHAN. Ay, what did her husband say?— 30  
Something dang'd cute, I reckon

JESSAMY. "And her husband said, you have  
had your will all your lifetime, and would  
you have it after you are dead too?"

JONATHAN. Ho, ho, hol There the old man  
was even with her; he was up to the notch—  
ha, ha, hal

JESSAMY. But, Mr Jonathan, you must not  
laugh so. Why, you ought to have uttered  
*piano*, and you have laughed *fortissimo* 40  
Look here, you see these marks, A B C  
and so on; these are the references to the  
other part of the book. Let us turn to it,  
and you will see the directions how to  
manage the muscles. This (*turns over*) was  
note D you blundered at—"You must  
purse the mouth into a smile, then titter,  
discovering the lower part of the three front  
upper teeth."

JONATHAN. How? read it again 50

JESSAMY. "There was a certain man"—very

well—"who had a sad scolding wife,"—  
why don't you laugh?

JONATHAN. Now, that scolding wife sticks in  
my gizzard so pluckily that I can't laugh  
for the blood and nowns of me. Let me look  
grave here, and I'll laugh your bellyfull  
where the old creature's a-dying.—

JESSAMY. "And she asked her husband"—  
(*Bell rings.*) My master's bell! he's re-  
turned, I fear—Here, Mr. Jonathan, take  
this gamut; and I make no doubt but with  
a few years' close application, you may be  
able to smile gracefully (*Exeunt severally*)

SCENE 2. CHARLOTTE'S Apartment

(*Enter MANLY*)

MANLY. What, no one at home? How un-  
fortunate to meet the only lady my heart  
was ever moved by, to find her engaged to  
another and confessing her partialty for  
mel Yet engaged to a man who, by her  
intimation, and his libertine conversation  
with me, I fear, does not merit her. Ayel  
there's the sting, for, were I assured that  
Maria was happy, my heart is not so selfish,  
but that it would dilate in knowing it, even  
though it were with another.—But to  
know she is unhappy!—I must drive these  
thoughts from me. Charlotte has some  
books; and this is what I believe she calls  
her little library (*Enters a closet*)

(*Enter DIMPLE leading LETITIA*)

LETITIA. And will you pretend to say, now,  
Mr Dimple, that you propose to break  
with Maria. Are not the banns published?  
Are not the clothes purchased? Are not the  
friends invited? In short, is it not a done  
affair?

DIMPLE. Believe me, my dear Letitia, I would  
not marry her.

LETITIA. Why have you not broke with her  
before this, as you all along deluded me by  
saying you would?

DIMPLE. Because I was in hopes she would  
ere this have broken with me.

LETITIA. You could not expect it.

DIMPLE. Nay, but be calm a moment; 'twas  
from my regard to you that I did not dis-  
card her.

LETITIA. Regard to me!

DIMPLE. Yes; I have done everything in my power to break with her, but the foolish girl is so fond of me that nothing can accomplish it. Besides, how can I offer her my hand, when my heart is indissolubly engaged to you?—

LETITIA. There may be reason in this; but why so attentive to Miss Manly?

DIMPLE. Attentive to Miss Manly! For heaven's sake, if you have no better opinion of my constancy, pay not so ill a compliment to my taste.

LETITIA. Did I not see you whisper her to-day?

DIMPLE. Possibly I might—but something of so very trifling a nature that I have already forgot what it was.

LETITIA. I believe, she has not forgot it.

DIMPLE. My dear creature, how can you for a moment suppose I should have any serious thoughts of that trifling, gay, flighty coquette, that disagreeable—

(Enter CHARLOTTE)

DIMPLE. My dear Miss Manly, I rejoice to see you; there is a charm in your conversation that always marks your entrance into company as fortunate.

LETITIA. Where have you been, my dear?

CHARLOTTE. Why, I have been about to twenty shops, turning over pretty things, and so have left twenty visits unpaid. I wish you would step into the carriage and whisk round, make my apology, and leave my cards where our friends are not at home, that you know will serve as a visit. Come, do go.

LETITIA. So anxious to get me out but I'll watch you. (Aside)—Oh! yes, I'll go; I want a little exercise.—Positively (Dimple offering to accompany her), Mr. Dimple, you shall not go, why, half my visits are cake and caudle visits, it won't do, you know, for you to go.

(Exit, but returns to the door in the back scene and listens)

DIMPLE. This attachment of your brother to Maria is fortunate.

CHARLOTTE. How did you come to the knowledge of it?

DIMPLE. I read it in their eyes.

CHARLOTTE. And I had it from her mouth. It would have amused you to have seen her! She that thought it so great an impropriety to praise a gentleman that she could not bring out one word in your favor, found a redundancy to praise him.

DIMPLE. I have done everything in my power to assist his passion there, your delicacy, my dearest girl, would be shocked at half the instances of neglect and misbehavior.

CHARLOTTE. I don't know how I should bear neglect, but Mr. Dimple must misbehave himself indeed to forfeit my good opinion.

DIMPLE. Your good opinion, my angel, is the pride and pleasure of my heart, and if the most respectful tenderness for you and an utter indifference for all your sex besides, can make me worthy of your esteem, I shall richly merit it.

CHARLOTTE. All my sex besides, Mr. Dimple—you forgot your tête-à-tête with Letitia.

DIMPLE. How can you, my lovely angel, cast a thought on that insipid, wry-mouthed, ugly creature!

CHARLOTTE. But her fortune may have charms?

DIMPLE. Not to a heart like mine. The man who has been blessed with the good opinion of my Charlotte must despise the allurements of fortune.

CHARLOTTE. I am satisfied.

DIMPLE. Let us think no more on the odious subject, but devote the present hour to happiness.

CHARLOTTE. Can I be happy, when I see the man I prefer going to be married to another?

DIMPLE. Have I not already satisfied my charming angel that I can never think of marrying the pining Maria? But even if it were so, could that be any bar to our happiness; for, as the poet sings—

"Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,  
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

Come then, my charming angel! why delay our bliss! The present moment is ours; the next is in the hand of fate.

(Kissing her.)

CHARLOTTE. Begone, Sir! By your delusions  
you had almost lulled my honor asleep.

DIMPLE. Let me lull the demon to sleep again  
with kisses.

(*He struggles with her, she screams.*)

(*Enter MANLY*)

MANLY. Turn, villain! and defend yourself.—  
(*Draws. VAN ROUGH enters and beats  
down their swords*)

VAN ROUGH Is the devil in you? are you  
going to murder one another?

(*Holding DIMPLE*)

DIMPLE. Hold him, hold him—I can com-  
mand my passion.

(*Enter JONATHAN*)

JONATHAN. What the rattle ails you? Is the  
old one in you? Let the colonel alone, can't  
you? I feel chock full of fight—do you  
want to kill the colonel?

MANLY. Be still, Jonathan, the gentleman does  
not want to hurt me

JONATHAN. Gosh!—I wish he did, I'd show  
him Yankee boys' play, pretty quick—  
Don't you see you have frightened the  
young woman into the hysterics?

VAN ROUGH. Pray, some of you explain this,  
what has been the occasion of all this racket?

MANLY. That gentleman can explain it to you,  
it will be a very diverting story for an in-  
tended father-in-law to hear

VAN ROUGH. How was this matter, Mr Van  
Dumpling?

DIMPLE. Sir,—upon my honor—all I know  
is, that I was talking to this young lady,  
and this gentleman broke in on us, in a  
very extraordinary manner

VAN ROUGH. Why, all this is nothing to the  
purpose, can you explain it, Miss? (*To*  
CHARLOTTE)

(*Enter LETITIA through the back scene*)

LETITIA. I can explain it to that gentleman's  
confusion. Though long betrothed to your  
daughter (*to VAN ROUGH*), yet, allured  
by my fortune, it seems (*with shame do  
I speak it*), he has privately paid his ad-  
dresses to me. I was drawn in to listen to  
him by his assuring me that the match was  
made by his father without his consent, and

that he proposed to break with Maria,  
whether he married me or not. But what-  
ever were his intentions respecting your  
daughter, Sir, even to me he was false; for  
he has repeated the same story, with some  
cruel reflections upon my person, to Miss  
Manly.

JONATHAN. What a tarnal curse!

LETITIA. Nor is this all, Miss Manly. When  
he was with me this very morning, he made  
the same ungenerous reflections upon the  
weakness of your mind as he has so recently  
done upon the defects of my person.

JONATHAN. What a tarnal curse and damn, too!

DIMPLE. (*Aside.*) Hal since I have lost Letitia,  
I believe I had as good make it up with  
Maria—Mr. Van Rough, at present I cannot  
enter into particulars; but, I believe I can  
explain everything to your satisfaction in  
private.

VAN ROUGH. There is another matter, Mr  
Van Dumpling, which I would have you  
explain.—pray, Sir, have Messrs. Van Cash  
and Co. presented you those bills for ac-  
ceptance?

DIMPLE. (*Aside.*) The deuce! Has he heard of  
those bills! Nay, then, all's up with Maria,  
too; but an affair of this sort can never pre-  
judice me among the ladies; they will rather  
long to know what the dear creature  
possesses to make him so agreeable (*To*  
MANLY) Sir, you'll hear from me

MANLY. And you from me, Sir.—

DIMPLE. Sir, you wear a sword —

MANLY. Yes, Sir. This sword was presented  
to me by that brave Gallic hero, the Mar-  
quis De La Fayette. I have drawn it in the  
service of my country, and in private life,  
on the only occasion where a man is justified  
in drawing his sword, in defence of a lady's  
honor. I have fought too many battles in  
the service of my country to dread the  
imputation of cowardice.—Death from a  
man of honor would be a glory you do  
not merit; you shall live to bear the insult  
of man and the contempt of that sex whose  
general smiles afforded you all your hap-  
piness.

DIMPLE. You won't meet me, Sir?—Then I'll  
post you for a coward.

MANLY. I'll venture that, Sir.—The reputa-



tion of my life does not depend upon the breath of a Mr. Dimple. I would have you to know, however, Sir, that I have a cane to chastise the insolence of a scoundrel, and a sword and the good laws of my country, to protect me from the attempts of an assassin.—

DIMPLE. Mighty well! Very fine, indeed!—ladies and gentlemen, I take my leave, and you will please to observe, in the case of my deportment, the contrast between a gentleman, who has read Chesterfield and received the polish of Europe, and an unpolished, untravelled American (Exit.)

(Enter MARIA)

MARIA. Is he indeed gone?—

LETITIA. I hope never to return

VAN ROUGH. I am glad I heard of those bills; though it's plaguey unlucky. I hoped to see Mary married before I died.

MANLY. Will you permit a gentleman, Sir, to offer himself as a suitor to your daughter? Though a stranger to you, he is not altogether so to her, or unknown in this city. You may find a son-in-law of more fortune, but you can never meet with one who is richer in love for her, or respect for you.

VAN ROUGH. Why, Mary, you have not let this gentleman make love to you without my leave?

MANLY. I did not say, Sir—

MARIA. Say, Sir—I—the gentleman, to be sure, met me accidentally

VAN ROUGH. Ha, ha, ha! Mark me, Mary; young folks think old folks to be fools, but old folks know young folks to be fools.—Why, I knew all about this affair.—Thus was only a cunning way I had to bring it about.—Hark ye! I was in the closet when you and he were at our house. (Turns to the company.) I heard that little baggage say she loved her old father, and would die to make him happy! Oh! how I loved the little baggage!—And you talked very prudently, young man. I have inquired into your character, and find you to be a man of

punctuality and mind the main chance. And so, as you love Mary, and Mary loves you, you shall have my consent immediately to be married. I'll settle my fortune on you, and go and live with you the remainder of my life.

MANLY. Sir, I hope—

VAN ROUGH. Come, come, no fine speeches; mind the main chance, young man, and you and I shall always agree

LETITIA. I sincerely wish you joy (*advancing to MARIA*), and hope your pardon for my conduct.

MARIA. I thank you for your congratulations, and hope we shall at once forget the wretch who has given us so much disquiet, and the trouble that he has occasioned.

CHARLOTTE. And I, my dear Maria,—how shall I look up to you for forgiveness? I, who, in the practice of the meanest arts, have violated the most sacred rights of friendship! I can never forgive myself or hope charity from the world, but I confess I have much to hope from such a brother, and I am happy that I may soon say, such a sister.

MARIA. My dear, you distress me, you have all my love

MANLY. And mine

CHARLOTTE. If repentance can entitle me to forgiveness, I have already much merit, for I despise the littleness of my past conduct. I now find that the heart of any worthy man cannot be gained by invidious attacks upon the rights and characters of others—by countenancing the addresses of a thousand,—or that the finest assemblage of features, the greatest taste in dress, the genteelst address, or the most brilliant wit, cannot eventually secure a coquette from contempt and ridicule.

MANLY. And I have learned that probity, virtue, honor, though they should not have received the polish of Europe, will secure to an honest American the good graces of his fair countrywoman, and, I hope, the applause of THE PUBLIC.

1748 ~ *Hugh Henry Brackenridge* ~ 1816

THE SON of poor emigrants from Scotland who brought him to Pennsylvania when he was five, Brackenridge was taught the classics by a neighboring minister, sometimes walking thirty miles to borrow books, and began to teach for a living when he was fifteen. About 1768 he became master of the grammar school at Princeton so that he might attend the College of New Jersey. Like his classmates, Freneau and Madison, he was most interested in poetry and Whig politics—a fact manifested by the poem, *The Rising Glory of America*, which he and Freneau wrote for their commencement.

Brackenridge served as a military chaplain during the Revolution, taught school in Maryland, and wrote two plays on patriotic subjects for his pupils to produce, *The Battle of Bunker's Hill* (1776) and *The Death of General Montgomery* (1777). During 1779 he edited the *United States Magazine* at Philadelphia. After leaving the Presbyterian church because of difficulties with the creed, he read law and began practice in Pittsburgh in 1781. In this frontier town he became a leading citizen, helping to found the first newspaper, the first bookstore, and the Pittsburgh Academy. He wrote for the *Pittsburgh Gazette* both prose and Hudibrastic verse in defence of the Constitution. Later, as leader of the Democratic-Republican party in his section, he was made justice of the supreme court of Pennsylvania.

Shortly after settling at Pittsburgh, chagrined at being defeated by an ignorant opponent in an election, Brackenridge conceived the idea of writing a Hudibrastic verse description of the crudenesses and eccentricities of frontier life and manners in the Allegheny and Ohio regions. He wisely abandoned this medium for a prose narrative remotely like *Don Quixote*, in which Captain Farrago, an intelligent, whimsical gentleman, rides about with his Sancho, a rascally Irish servant, named Teague O'Regan. Teague's ignorant presumption and the gullibility and lack of judgment of the people among whom they travel get them into one absurd difficulty after another. These episodes are intermixed with chapters of comment reminiscent of Swift, Sterne, and Fielding. The first installment of *Modern Chivalry*, published in 1792, was followed by several others, the last appearing in 1815. Despite its witty and caustic ridiculing of contemporary political and social absurdities of his own section, it achieved considerable popularity among the very classes satirized, perhaps because he attacked the extremes of both Democrats and Federalists from the sane middle ground of the classical golden mean.

The standard biography is *The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge*, by C. M. Newlin, who also has the article in *DAB*. Other sources of material on Brackenridge's life are his *Incidents of the Insurrection in the Western Part of Pennsylvania* (1795) and his son H. M. Brackenridge's

"Memoir of H. H. Brackenridge," *Southern Literary Messenger*, Jan., 1842 (reprinted in *Modern Chivalry*, editions of 1846 and 1856), and *Recollections of Persons and Places in the West* (1834, revised 1868). C. F. Heartman has prepared a useful *Bibliography of the Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge* (1917) *The Battle of Bunker's Hill* was reprinted in M. J. Moses, *Representative American Plays*, Vol I (1918) Many editions of *Modern Chivalry containing the Adventures of Captain John Farrago, and Teague O'Regan, His Servant* have been issued, of which the best and most recent is that in the American Fiction Series (1937), with introduction by C. M. Newlin. An abridgment was edited, with introduction by Ernest Brenneke, in the Rogues' Bookshelf in 1926. See also: M. I. Eakin, "Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Lawyer," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, July, 1927, Mildred Williams, "Hugh Henry Brackenridge as a Judge of the State Supreme Court, 1799-1816," *ibid.*, Oct., 1927, and J. C. Andrews, "The *Pittsburgh Gazette*—a Pioneer Newspaper," *ibid.*, XV, 293-307

### From MODERN CHIVALRY

#### PART I, CHAPTER III

#### *The Election—The Captain Dissuades a Weaver from Being a Candidate, but Is Near Losing Teague, Whom the Voters Wish to Take up in His Place*

AT an early hour, our knight-errant and his squire set out on their way, and soon arrived at a place of crossroads, at a public house and store, where a number of people were convened for the purpose of electing persons to represent them in the legislature of the state. This was not the annual election, but to fill an occasional vacancy. There was a weaver who was a candidate and seemed to have a good deal of interest among the people. But another, who was a man of education, was his competitor. Relying on some talent of speaking which he thought he possessed, and getting on the stump of a large oak tree for the convenience of a more elevated position, he thus addressed the people:

"Fellow citizens," said he, "I pretend not to any great abilities, but am conscious to myself that I have the best good will to serve you. But it is very astonishing to me that this man should conceive himself qualified for the trust. For though my acquirements are not great, yet his are still less. The business which he pursues must necessarily take up so much of his time that he cannot apply himself to political studies. I should therefore think it would be more answerable to your dignity and conducive to your interest, to be represented by a man at least of some letters than by an

illiterate man like this. It will be more honorable for himself to remain at his loom and knot threads than to come forward in a legislative capacity, because in the one case, he is in the sphere suited to his education, in the other, he is like a fish out of water and must struggle for breath in a new element. It is not because he is a weaver that I object to him, but because he is nothing but a weaver, and entirely destitute of the qualifications necessary to fill the office to which he aspires. The occupation a man pursues for a livelihood is but a secondary consideration, if any consideration at all. Warriors and statesmen and sages may be found at the plough and the work bench, but this man has not the slightest pretensions beyond the mysteries of his trade.

"Is it possible that he can understand the affairs of government, whose mind has been entirely concentrated to the small object of weaving webs, to the price by the yard, the grist of the thread, and such like matters as concern the manufacturer of clothes? The feet of him who weaves are more occupied than the head, or at least as much, and therefore he must be, at least, but in half accustomed to exercise his mental powers. For these reasons, all other things set aside, the chance is in my favor with respect to information. However, you will decide, and give your suffrages to him or to me as you shall judge expedient."

The Captain hearing these observations and looking at the weaver, made free to subjoin something in support of what had been just said. Said he, "I have no prejudice against a weaver more than another man. Nor do I know any harm in the trade, save that from

the sedentary life in a damp place, there is usually a paleness of the countenance, but this is a physical, not a moral evil. Such usually occupy subterranean apartments; not for the purpose, like Demosthenes, of shaving their heads and writing over eight times the history of Thucydides, and perfecting a style of oratory, but rather to keep the thread moist, or because this is considered but as an inglorious sort of trade, and is frequently thrust away into cellars and damp out-houses which are not occupied for a better use

"But to rise from the cellar to the senate house would be an unnatural hoist for one whose mind had not been prepared for it by a previous course of study or training, either self-instructed and gifted with superior intellect, or having the good fortune to have received an education, with also the advantage of actual experience in public affairs. To come from counting threads and adjusting them to the splits of a reed, to regulate the finances of a government would be preposterous, there being no congruity in the case. There is no analogy between knotting threads and framing laws. It would be a reversion of the order of things. Not that a manufacturer of linen or woolen or other stuffs is an inferior character, but a different one from that which ought to be employed in affairs of state. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this subject, for you must all be convinced of the truth and propriety of what I say. But if you will give me leave to take the manufacturer aside a little, I think I can explain to him my ideas on the subject, and very probably prevail with him to withdraw his pretensions." The people seeming to acquiesce, and beckoning to the weaver, they withdrew aside, and the Captain addressed him in the following words:

"Mr. Traddle," said he, "I have not the smallest idea of wounding your feelings, but it would seem to me it would be more your interest to pursue your occupation than to launch out into that of which you have no knowledge. When you go to the senate house, the application to you will not be to warp a web, but to make laws for the commonwealth. Now, suppose that the making these laws requires a knowledge of commerce, of finance, and of the infinite variety of subjects em-

braced by the laws, civil or criminal, what service could you render? It is possible you might think justly; but could you speak? You are not in the habit of public speaking. You are not furnished with those commonplace ideas with which even very ignorant men can pass for knowing something. There is nothing makes a man so ridiculous as to attempt what is beyond his capacity. You are no tumbler, for instance, yet should you give out that you could vault upon a man's back or turn heels over head like the wheels of a cart, the stiffness of your joints would incumber you, and you would fall to the ground. Such a squash as that would do you damage. The getting up to ride on the state is an unsafe thing to those who are not accustomed to such horsemanship. It is a disagreeable thing for a man to be laughed at, and there is no way of keeping one's self from it but by avoiding all affectation." These observations did not seem to make much impression on the weaver, who argued that common sense was often better than learning.

While they were thus discoursing, a bustle had taken place among the crowd. Teague, hearing so much about elections and serving the government, took it into his head that he could be a legislator himself. The thing was not displeasing to the people, who seemed to favor his pretensions, owing, in some degree, to there being several of his countrymen among the crowd, but more especially to the fluctuation of the popular mind and a disposition to what is new and ignoble. For though the weaver was not the most elevated object of choice, yet he was still preferable to this tatterdemalion.

The Captain coming up and finding what was on the carpet, was chagrined at not having been able to give the voters a better idea of the importance of a legislative trust, alarmed also, from an apprehension of the loss of his servant. Under these impressions he resumed his address to the people. Said he, "This is making the matter still worse, gentlemen, this servant of mine is but a bogtrotter, who can scarcely speak the dialect in which your laws ought to be written, but certainly has never read a single treatise on any political subject; for the truth is, he cannot read at all. The young

people of the lower class, in Ireland, have seldom the advantage of a good education; especially the descendants of the ancient Irish, who have most of them a great assurance of countenance but little information or literature. This young man, whose family name is O'Regan, has been my servant for several years; and, except a too great fondness for whiskey, which now and then brings him into scrapes, he has demeaned himself in a manner tolerable enough. But he is totally ignorant of the great principles of legislation, and more especially the particular interests of the government. A free government is a noble acquisition to a people; and this freedom consists in an equal right to make laws, and to have the benefit of the laws when made. Though doubtless, in such a government, the lowest citizen may become chief magistrate, yet it is sufficient to possess the right, not absolutely necessary to exercise it. Or even if you should think proper, now and then, to show your privilege and exert, in a signal manner, the democratic prerogative, yet is it not descending too low to filch away from me a servant whom I cannot well spare and for whom I have paid my money?<sup>1</sup> You are surely carrying the matter too far, in thinking to make a senator of this hostler, to take him away from an employment to which he has been bred and put him to another to which he has served no apprenticeship, to set those hands which have lately been employed in currying my horse, to the draughting bills and preparing business for the house."

The people were tenacious of their choice and insisted on giving Teague their suffrages, and by the frown upon their brows, seemed to indicate resentment at what had been said, as indirectly charging them with want of judgment, or calling in question their privilege to do what they thought proper. "It is a very strange thing," said one of them, who was a speaker for the rest, "that after having conquered Burgoyne and Cornwallis and got a government of our own, we cannot put in whom we please. This young man may be your servant or another man's servant, but

if we choose to make him a delegate, what is that to you? He may not be yet skilled in the matter, but there is a good day coming. We will empower him; and it is better to trust a plain man like him than one of your high-flyers that will make laws to suit their own purposes."

"I had much rather," said the Captain, "you would send the weaver, though I thought that improper, than to invade my household and thus take from me the person who is employed to curry my horse and black my boots."

The prolocutor of the people gave him to understand that his objections were useless, for the people had determined on the choice, and Teague they would have for a representative.

Finding it answered no end to expostulate, he requested to speak a word with Teague by himself. Stepping aside, he said to him, composing his voice and addressing him in a soft manner "Teague, you are quite wrong in this matter they have put into your head. Do you know what it is to be a member of a deliberative body? What qualifications are necessary? Do you understand anything of geography? If a question should be put to make a law to dig a canal in some part of the state, can you describe the bearing of the mountains and the course of the rivers? Or, if commerce is to be pushed to some new quarter by the force of regulations, are you competent to decide in such a case? There will be questions of law and astronomy on the carpet. How you must gape and stare like a fool, when you come to be asked your opinion on these subjects! Are you acquainted with the principles of finance, with the funding public securities, the ways and means of raising the revenue, providing for the discharge of the public debts, and all other things which respect the economy of the government? Even if you had knowledge, have you a facility of speaking? I would suppose you would have too much pride to go to the house just to say 'Ay' or 'No.' This is not the fault of your nature but of your education, having been accustomed to dig turf in your early years, rather than instructing yourself in the classics or common school books.

"When a man becomes a member of a public body, he is like a raccoon or other beast that climbs up the fork of a tree; the boys pushing

<sup>1</sup> Teague was an indentured servant, one who had sold his services for a period of years, in payment for his passage from Ireland.

at him with pitchforks, or throwing stones, or shooting at him with arrows; the dogs barking in the meantime One will find fault with your not speaking; another with your speaking, if you speak at all. They will put you in the newspapers and ridicule you as a perfect beast. There is what they call the *caricatura*, that is, representing you with a dog's head, or a cat's claw. It is the devil to be exposed to the squibs and crackers of the gazette wits and publications. You know no more about these matters than a goose, and yet you would undertake rashly, without advice, to enter on the office, nay, contrary to advice. For I would not for a hundred guineas, though I have not the half to spare, that the breed of the O'Regans should come to this, bringing on them a worse stain than stealing sheep. You have nothing but your character, Teague, in a new country to depend upon Let it never be said that you quitted an honest livelihood, the taking care of my horse, to follow the new fangled whims of the times and be a statesman And besides, have I not promised to do something clever towards settling you in life hereafter, provided you will serve me faithfully in my travels? Something better than you have thought of may turn up in the course of our rambles "

Teague was moved chiefly with the last part of the address, and consented to relinquish his pretensions

The Captain, glad of this, took him back to the people and announced his disposition to decline the honor which they had intended him.

Teague acknowledged that he had changed his mind and was willing to remain in a private station

The people did not seem well pleased, but as nothing more could be said about the matter, they turned their attention to the weaver and gave him their suffrages.

#### CHAPTER XIII

*The Captain Feigns a Wish That Teague Should Accept the Challenge in His Place—But He Positively Declines the Honor—Sends an Answer*

Having thus dismissed the secondary man, he called in his servant Teague, and accosted

him as follows. "Teague," said he, "you have heretofore discovered an ambition to be employed in some way that would advance your reputation. There is now a case fallen out, to which you are fully competent. It is not a matter that requires the head to contrive, but the hand to execute The greatest fool is as fit for it as a wise man It is indeed your greatest blockheads that chiefly undertake it The knowledge of law, physic, or divinity is out of the question Literature and political understanding is useless. Nothing more is necessary than a little resolution of the heart Yet it is an undertaking which is of much estimation with the rabble, and has a great many on its side to approve and praise it The females of the world, especially, admire the act, and call it valor. I know you wish to stand well with the ladies. Here is an opportunity of advancing your credit I have had what is called a challenge sent to me this morning. It is from a certain Jacko, who is a suitor to a Miss Vapor, and has taken offence at an expression of mine respecting him I wish you to accept the challenge, and fight him for me "

At this proposition, Teague looked wild, and made apology, that he was not much used to boxing or cudgelling, except, when he had a quarrel, or at a fair at home. "Boxing!" said the Captain, "you are to fight what is called a duel You are to encounter him with pistols, and put a bullet through him if you can. It is true, he will have the chance of putting one through you, but in that consists the honor, for where there is no danger, there is no glory You will provide yourself a second There is an hostler here at the public house that is a brave fellow and will answer the purpose Being furnished with a second, you will provide yourself with a pair of pistols, powder, and ball, of course In the meantime your adversary, notified of your intentions, will do the like. Thus equipped, you will advance to the place agreed upon The ground will be measured out, ten, seven, or five steps, back to back, and coming round to your place, fire Or taking your ground, stand still and fire; or it may be, advance and fire as you meet, at what distance you think proper. The rules in this respect are not fixed, but as the parties can agree, or the seconds point out When you

come to fire, be sure you keep a steady hand, and take good aim. Remember that the pistol barrel being short, the powder is apt to throw the bullet up. Your sight, therefore, ought to be about the waistband of his breeches, so that you have the whole length of his body, and his head in the bargain, to come and go upon. It is true, he, in the meantime, will take the same advantage of you. He may hit you about the groin, or the belly. I have known some shot in the thigh, or the leg. The throat also, and the head are in themselves vulnerable. It is no uncommon thing to have an arm broke, or a splinter struck off the nose, or an eye shot out; but as in that case the ball mostly passes through the brain, and the man being dead at any rate, the loss of sight is not felt."

As the Captain spoke, Teague seemed to feel in himself every wound which was described, the ball hitting him, now in one part, and now in another. At the last words, it seemed to pass through his head, and he was half dead, in imagination. Making a shift to express himself, he gave the Captain to understand that he could by no means undertake the office. "What?" said the Captain, "you, whom nothing would serve, some time ago, but to be a legislator, or philosopher, or preacher, in order to gain fame, will now decline a business for which you are qualified! This requires no knowledge of finances, no reading of natural history, or any study of the fathers. You have nothing more to do than keep a steady hand and a good eye."

"In the early practice of this exercise—I mean the combat of the duel,—it was customary to exact an oath of the combatants, before they entered the lists, that they had no enchantments, or power of witchcraft, about them. Whether you should think it necessary to put him to his *voir dire* on this point, I shall not say; but I am persuaded that on your part you have too much honor to make use of spells, or undue means, to take away his life or save your own. You will leave all to the chance of fair shooting. One thing you will observe, and which is allowable in this matter; you will take care not to present yourself with a full breast, but angularly, and your head turned round over the left shoulder, like a weathercock. For thus a smaller surface being

presented to an adversary, he will be less likely to hit you. You must throw your legs into lines parallel, and keep them one directly behind the other. Thus you will stand like a sail hauled close to the wind. Keep a good countenance, a sharp eye, and a sour look; and if you feel anything like colic, or palpitation of the heart, make no noise about it. If the ball should take you in the gills, or the gizzard, fall down as decently as you can, and die like a man of honor."

It was of no use to urge the matter; the Irishman was but the more opposed to the proposition, and utterly refused to be *after* fighting in any such manner. The Captain, finding this to be the case, dismissed him to clean his boots and spurs and rub down his horse in the stable.

On reflection, it seemed advisable to the Captain to write an answer to the card which Colonel or Major Jacko, or whatever his title may have been, had sent him this morning. It was as follows:

"Sir,—I have two objections to this duel matter. The one is, lest I should hurt you, and the other, lest you should hurt me. I do not see any good it would do me to put a bullet through any part of your body. I could make no use of you when dead for any culinary purpose, as I would a rabbit or a turkey. I am no cannibal to feed on the flesh of men. Why, then, shoot down a human creature, of which I could make no use? A buffalo would be better meat. For though your flesh may be delicate and tender, yet it wants that firmness and consistency which takes and retains salt. At any rate, it would not be fit for long sea voyages. You might make a good barbecue, it is true, being of the nature of a raccoon or an opossum, but people are not in the habit of barbecuing anything human now. As to your hide, it is not worth taking off, being little better than that of a year-old colt."

"It would seem to me a strange thing to shoot at a man that would stand still to be shot at, inasmuch as I have been heretofore used to shoot at things flying, or running, or jumping. Were you on a tree now, like a squirrel, endeavoring to hide yourself in the branches, or like a raccoon, that after much

eyeing and spying, I observe at length in the crotch of a tall oak, with boughs and leaves intervening, so that I could just get a sight of his hinder parts, I should think it pleasurable enough to take a shot at you. But as it is, there is no skill or judgment requisite either to discover or take you down.

"As to myself, I do not much like to stand in the way of anything harmful I am under apprehensions you might hit me. That being the case, I think it most advisable to stay at a distance. If you want to try your pistols, take some object, a tree, or a barn door, about my dimensions. If you hit that, send me word, and I shall acknowledge that if I had been in the same place, you might also have hit me

John Farrago,  
Late Captain, Penn Militia  
Major Valentine Jacko, U S Army "

#### CHAPTER XIV

#### *Containing a Grave Dissertation on the Origin and Use of the Duel*

The Captain was a good man, but unacquainted with the world. His ideas were drawn chiefly from what may be called the old school, the Greek and Roman notions of things. The combat of the duel was to them unknown, though it seems strange that a people who were famous for almost all arts and sciences should have remained ignorant of its use. I do not conceive how, as a people, they could exist without it. But so it was, they actually were without the knowledge of it. For we do not find any trace of this custom in the poets or historians of all antiquity.

I do not know at what period, precisely, the custom was introduced, or to whom it was owing; but omitting this disquisition, we content ourselves with observing that it has produced as great an improvement in manners as the discovery of the loadstone and mariner's compass has in navigation. Not that I mean to descend at full length on the valuable effects of it, but simply to observe that it is a greater aid to government than the alliance of the church and state itself. If Dr Warburton had had leisure, I could wish he had written a treatise upon it. Some affect to ridicule it, as

carrying to a greater length small differences than the aggravations may justify. As for instance, a man is angry enough with you to give you a slap in the face; but the custom says he must shoot you through the head. I think the smaller the aggravation, the nicer the sense of honor. The heaviest mind will resent a gross affront, but to kill a man where there is no affront at all shows a great sensibility. It is immaterial whether there is or is not an injury, provided the world thinks there is; for it is the opinion of mankind we are to consult. It is a duty which we owe them, to provide for their amusement. *Non nascimur nobis ipsius*, we are not born for ourselves, but for others. *Decorum pro patria mori*, it is a becoming thing to die for one's country, and shall it not also be accounted honorable to throw one's life away for the entertainment of a few particular neighbors and acquaintances? It is true, the tears that will be shed upon your grave will not make the grass grow, but you will have the consolation, when you leave the world, to have fallen in the bed of honor.

It is certainly a very noble institution, that of the duel, and it has been carried to very great perfection in some respects. Nevertheless, I would submit it to the public whether still farther improvements might not be made in the laws and regulations of it. For instance, could it not be reduced nearer to an equality of chances by proportioning the caliber or bore of the pistol, the length of the barrel, also, to the size of the duellist who holds it, or by fixing the ratio of distance in proportion to the bulk of combatants? To explain myself. When I am to fight a man of small size, I ought to have a longer pistol than my adversary because my mark is smaller; or I ought to be permitted to come nearer to him. For it is altogether unfair that men of unequal bulk should fire at equal distances, and with equal calibers. The smaller size multiplied by the larger space or larger pistol, would equal the larger size multiplied by the smaller space or smaller pistol. If this amendment of the duel laws should be approved by men of honor, let it be added to the code.



## CHAPTER XV

*Proposal of the Indian Treaty Maker—  
The Chapter Very Near Ending in  
Homicide*

In the edition of *Don Quixote* by the Spanish Academy, a map is prefixed tracing, as the result of great research and critical examination, the exact line of march of the valiant Manchegan. The attempt is far from being successful, yet it is quite ingenious. I dare say the travels of Hudibras might be traced with equal certainty. In this work care has been taken to afford an ample field of research for the curious inquirer as to the places visited by Captain Farrago, and the time occupied in his travels. It is enough for the present to say that not long after what has been related in the last chapter, being at a certain place, he was accosted by a stranger in the following manner:

"Captain," said he, "I have heard of a young man in your service who talks Irish. Now, sir, my business is that of an Indian treaty maker, and am on my way with a party of kings and half-kings, to the commissioners, to hold a treaty. My king of the Kickapoos, who was a Welsh blacksmith, took sick by the way, and is dead. I have heard of this lad of yours, and could wish to have him a while to supply his place. The treaty will not last longer than a couple of weeks, and as the government will probably allow three or four thousand dollars for the treaty, it will be in our power to make it worth your while to spare him for that time."

"Your king of the Kickapoos," said the Captain, "what does that mean?"—Said the stranger, "It is just this. You have heard of the Indian nations to the westward that occasionally make war upon the frontier settlements. It has been a policy of government to treat with these, and distribute goods. Commissioners are appointed for that purpose. Now you are not to suppose that it is an easy matter to catch a real chief and bring him from the woods; or if at some expense one was brought, the goods would go to his use, whereas, it is much more profitable to hire substitutes and make chiefs of our own. And as some unknown gibberish is necessary, to

pass for an Indian language, we generally make use of Welsh, or Low Dutch, or Irish, or pick up an ingenious fellow here and there who can imitate a language by sounds of his own in his mouth and throat. But we prefer one who can speak a real tongue, and give more for him. We cannot afford you a great deal at this time for the use of your man, because it is not a general treaty, where twenty or thirty thousand dollars are appropriated for the purpose of holding it, but an occasional, or what we call a running treaty, by way of brightening the chain and holding fast friendship. The commissioners will doubtless be glad to see us and procure from government an allowance for the treaty. For the more treaties, the more use for commissioners. The business must be kept up and treaties made, if there are none of themselves. My Piankasha and Choctaw chiefs are very good fellows, the one of them a Scotch pedlar that talks the Erse, the other has been some time in Canada and has a little broken Indian, I know not of what language, but has been of great service in assisting to teach the rest some Indian customs and manners. I have had the whole of them for a fortnight past under my tuition, teaching them war songs and dances, and to make responses at the treaty. If your man is tractable, I can make him a Kickapoo in about nine days. A breech-clout and leggins that I took off the blacksmith that died, I have ready to put on him. He must have part of his head shaved and painted, with feathers on his crown, but the paint will rub off, and the hair grow in a short time, so that he can go about with you again."

"It is a very strange affair," said the Captain. "Is it possible that such deception can be practised in a new country? It astonishes me that the government does not detect such imposition."

"The government," said the Indian treaty-man, "is at a great distance. It knows no more of Indians than a cow does of Greek. The legislature hears of wars and rumors of wars, and supports the executive in forming treaties. How is it possible for men who live remote from the scene of action to have adequate ideas of the nature of Indians, or the transactions that are carried on in their behalf? Do

you think the one half of those savages that come to treat are real representatives of the nation? Many of them are not savages at all, but weavers and pedlars, as I have told you, picked up to make kings and chiefs. I speak of those particularly that come trading down to inland towns or the metropolis. I would not communicate these mysteries of our trade, were it not that I confide in your good sense, and have occasion for your servant."

"It is a mystery of iniquity," said the Captain. "Do you suppose that I would countenance such a fraud upon the public?"—"I do not know," said the other; "it is a very common thing for men to speculate, now-a-days. If you will not, another will. A hundred dollars might as well be in your pocket as another man's. I will give you that for the use of your servant for a week or two, and say no more about it."

"It is an idea new to me entirely," said the Captain, "that Indian princes, whom I have seen escorted down as such, were no more than trumpery, disguised as you mention. That such should be introduced to polite assemblies and have the honor to salute the fair ladies with a kiss, the greatest beauties thinking themselves honored by having the salutation of a sovereign."—"It is so," said the other; "I had a bricklayer once, whom I passed for a Chippewa, and who has dined with clubs, and sat next the President. He was blind of an eye, and was called Blind Sam by the traders. I had given it out that he was a great warrior, and had lost his eye by an arrow in war with a rival nation. These things are now reduced to a system; and it is so well known to those who are engaged in the traffic that we know nothing of it."

"How the devil," said the Captain, "do you get speeches made and interpret them so as to pass for truth?"—"That is an easy matter," said the other; "Indian speeches are nearly all alike. You have only to talk of burying hatchets under large trees, kindling fires, brightening chains; with a demand, at the latter end, of rum to get drunk on."

"I much doubt," said the Captain, "whether treaties that are carried on in earnest are of any great use."—"Of none at all," said the other; "especially as the practice of giving

goods prevails; because this is an inducement to a fresh war. Thus being the case, it can be no harm to make a farce of the whole matter; or rather a profit of it, by such means as I propose to you, and have pursued myself."

"After all," said the Captain, "I cannot but consider it as a kind of contraband and illicit traffic; and I must be excused from having any hand in it. I shall not betray your secret, but I shall not favor it. It would ill become me, whose object in riding about in this manner is to impart just ideas on all subjects, to share in such ill-gotten gain."

The Indian treaty-man, finding it in vain to say more, withdrew.

The Captain, apprehending that he might not yet drop his designs upon the Irishman, but he tampering with him out of doors should he come across him, sent for Teague. For he well knew that, should the Indian treaty-man get the first word of him, the idea of making him a king would turn his head, and it would be impossible to prevent his going with him.

Teague coming in, said the Captain to him, "Teague, I have discovered in you for some time past a great spirit of ambition, which is doubtless commendable in a young person, and I have checked it only in cases where there was real danger, or apparent mischief. There is now an opportunity of advancing yourself, not so much in the way of honor as profit. But profit brings honor and is, indeed, the most substantial support of it. There has been a man here with me that carries on a trade with the Indians and tells me that red-headed scalps are in great demand with them. If you could spare yours, he would give a good price for it. I do not well know what use they make of this article, but so it is, the traders find their account in it. Probably they dress it with the hairy side out, and make tobacco pouches for the chiefs, when they meet in council. It saves dyeing, and, besides, the natural red hair of a man may, in their estimation, be superior to any color they can give by art. The taking off the scalp will not give much pain, it is so dexterously done by them with a crooked knife they have for that purpose. The mode of taking off the scalp is this: You lie down on your face; a warrior puts his feet upon your shoulders, collects

your hair in his left hand, and drawing a circle with the knife in his right, makes the incision, and with a sudden pull, separates it from the head, giving, in the meantime, what is called the scalp yell. The thing is done in such an instant that the pain is scarcely felt. He offered me an hundred dollars if I would have it taken off for his use, giving me directions, in the meantime, how to stretch it and dry it on a hoop. I told him, No! it was a perquisite of your own, and you might dispose of it as you thought proper. If you choose to dispose of it, I had no objections, but the bargain should be of your own making, and the price such as should please yourself. I have sent for you to give you a hint of this chapman, that you may have a knowledge of his wish to possess the property, and ask accordingly. It is probable you may bring him up to a half Johannes<sup>1</sup> more by holding out a little. But I do not think it would be advisable to lose the bargain. An hundred dollars for a little hairy flesh is a great deal. You will trot a long time before you make that with me. He will be with you probably to propose the purchase. You will know him when you see him. he is a tall-looking man, with leggins on, and has several Indians with him going to a treaty. He talked to me something of making you a king of the Kickapoos, after the scalp is off; but I would not count on that so much, because words are but wind, and promises are easily broken. I would advise you to make sure of the money in the first place, and take chance for the rest."

I have seen among the prints of Hogarth some such expression of countenance as that of Teague at this instant, who, as soon as he could speak, but with a double brogue on his tongue, began to intimate his disinclination to the traffic. The hair of his scalp, itself, in the meantime, had risen in opposition to it.—"Dear master, will you throw me into ridicule, and de blessed salvation of my life, and all dat I have in de world, to be trown like a dog to de savages, and have my flesh torn off my head to give to dese wild bastes to make a napsack to carry dear parates and tings in, for an hundred dollars or de like? It shall never

be said that de hair of de O'Regans made mackeseens for a wild Indian to trat upon. I would sooner throw my own head, hair and all, in de fire dan give it to dese paple to smoke wid out of dear long pipes."

"If this be your determination," said the Captain, "it will behoove you to keep yourself somewhat close, and while we remain at this public house, avoid any conversation with the chapman or his agents, should they come to tamper with you. For it is not improbable, while they are keeping you in talk, proposing to make you a Kickapoo chief and the like, they may snatch the scalp off your head, and you not be the wiser for it."

Teague thought the caution good, and resolving to abide by it, retired to the kitchen. The maid at this time, happening to want a log of wood, requested Teague to cut it for her. Taking the axe, accordingly, and going out, he was busy chopping, with his head down, while in the meantime, the Indian treaty-man had returned with one in Indian dress, who was the chief of the Killinoos, or at least passed for such, and whom he brought as having some recruiting talents, and might prevail with Teague to elope and join the company.

"I suppose," said the Indian treaty-man, "you are the waiter of the Captain who lodges here at present." Teague, hearing a man speak, and lifting up his head, saw the leggins on the one and the Indian dress on the other, and with a kind of involuntary effort threw the axe directly from him at the Killinoo. It missed him but about an inch, and fell behind. Teague, in the meantime, raising a shout of desperation, was fixed on the spot, and his locomotive faculties suspended, so that he could neither retreat nor advance, but stood still, like one enchanted or enchanted for the moment. The king of the Killinoos, in the meantime, drew his tomahawk and prepared for battle.

The Captain, who was reading at a front window, hearing the shout, looked about and saw what was going on at the woodpile. "Stop, villain," said he to the king of the Killinoos, "you are not to take that scalp yet, however much you may value it. He will not take an hundred dollars for it, nor five hundred, though you make him king of the Kicks-

<sup>1</sup> The half Johannes was a Portuguese coin worth about \$4.40 in American money.

poos, or anything else. It is no trifling matter to have the ears slit in tatters and the nose run through with a bodkin and a goosequill stuck across, so that you may go about your business—you will get no king of the Kickapoos here."

Under cover of this address of the Captain, Teague had retired to the kitchen and en-

sconced himself behind the rampart of the maid. The Indian treaty-man and the Killinoo chief, finding the measure hopeless, withdrew and turned their attention, it is to be supposed, to some other quarter to find a king of the Kickapoos, while the Captain, after paying his score, set out on his travels.

1792

## 1771 ~ Charles Brockden Brown ~ 1810

BROWN WAS BORN in Philadelphia and, as son of a well-to-do Quaker, was well educated at the Friends' Latin School but "saved from the corruption and tyranny of colleges," as Clara remarks in *Wieland*. As a delicate boy he read extensively, and during his school years paraphrased Ossian and parts of the Bible and outlined American epics on Columbus, Pizarro, and Cortez. The "Rhapsodist" essays in the *Columbian Magazine* in his nineteenth year were his earliest publication. Between 1787 and 1793 he studied law, was active in several literary clubs, read the works of French scientific and revolutionary writers, and made the acquaintance of Dr. Elihu H. Smith, of Connecticut, who became a helpful friend and critic. About 1795 Brown decided to become a writer, while probably supporting himself as teacher in the Friends' Latin School. His first important work, the somewhat "radical" *Alcuin*, written in 1796-1797 (Part I published 1798), argued for the social and economic privileges of women. In 1798 he left Philadelphia for New York, where he lived with his friends, Dr. Smith and the dramatist William Dunlap, turned out in rapid succession his six novels, and edited two literary and critical periodicals, thus establishing himself as the foremost American novelist and rivaling Dennie as a literary critic. After 1801, poverty and ill health beset him; he returned to Philadelphia, married, supported himself as a storekeeper, kept alive two periodicals, did considerable hack writing, and died of tuberculosis, February 22, 1810.

As a novelist, Brown shows most noticeably the influence of William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* in his "headlong style" of writing and his use of a shadowy, malignant "master mind" as the villain of his plots. Like Godwin, Brown believed that character is the product of environment and education and hence capable of perfectibility; that the understanding is corrupted by wealth and rank; that wrongdoing is the result of ignorance rather than innate depravity; and that it is our chief duty to show rational benevolence toward all mankind. For interest he borrows some of the Gothic devices of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels and her naturalistic solutions of her

mystifying horrors. The sentiment of Richardson and the latter's preoccupation with feminine characters are reflected also. An ardent advocate of literary nationalism, he made his most original contributions in his American characters and settings, mostly in eastern Pennsylvania and New York; in his American themes such as Indian warfare and the yellow fever epidemics of the 1790's; and in his use of unusual natural phenomena, sometimes only partially understood, such as spontaneous combustion, ventriloquism, religious mania (all in *Wieland*, 1798), somnambulism (in *Edgar Huntly*, 1799), and pestilence (in *Arthur Mervyn*, 1800). With no lack of sensational incident, and with some power of cumulative detail, he is humorless, his style is often stilted and wooden, and his characterization is sometimes inconsistent to the point of perverseness. Nevertheless he established the American novel, turned American fiction in a healthier direction than that of the sentimental novels of seduction of his predecessors, and in some respects anticipated the later themes and devices of Edgar Allan Poe. Brown's heroine Constantia was greatly admired by Shelley.

Collected editions of Brown's novels—*Wieland* (1798), *Edgar Huntly* (1799), *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800), *Clara Howard* (1801), and *Jane Talbot* (1801)—were issued in Boston, in 1827, and in Philadelphia in 1837 and in 1887 (the standard edition, by David McKay). *Wieland* has been edited with an introduction by F. L. Pattee in the American Authors Series (1926); *Edgar Huntly*, edited by D. L. Clark (1928), and *Ormond*, edited by E. Marchand, in the American Fiction Series (1937). A facsimile edition of Part I of *Alcuin* was issued at New Haven in 1935, Part II is available only in Dunlap's *Life of Brown*, I, 71-105 (1815).

Dunlap's biography is disappointing in details of the novelist's life. W. H. Prescott wrote the life of Brown in Sparks's Library of American Biography. D. L. Clark has unearthed new material, published in his *Charles Brockden Brown: A Critical Biography* (abstract, 1923). The DAB sketch is by Carl Van Doren.

For criticism, see D. L. Clark, "Brockden Brown and the Rights of Women," *University of Texas Bulletin*, No. 2212 (Mar. 22, 1922), and "Brockden Brown's First Attempt at Journalism," *University of Texas Studies in English*, VII, 155-174 (1927); John Erskine, *Leading American Novelists* (1910), 3-49; L. D. Loshe, *The Early American Novel* (1907), 29-58; A. R. Marble, *Heralds of American Literature* (1907), 279-318; A. H. Quinn, *American Fiction* (1936), 25-39; Ernest Marchand, "The Literary Opinions of C. B. Brown," *Studies in Philology*, XXXI, 541-566 (Oct., 1934); F. L. Mott, *History of American Magazines, 1741-1850* (1930); M. T. Solve, "Shelley and the Novels of C. B. Brown," in *F. N. Scott Anniversary Papers* (1929), 141-156; M. S. Vilas, *C. B. Brown: A Study of Early American Fiction* (1904).

#### From EDGAR HUNTLY

##### CHAPTER XVI

#### [Some Experiences of a Sleepwalker]

HERR, my friend, thou must permit me to pause. The following incidents are of a kind to which the most ardent invention has never

conceived a parallel. Fortune, in her most wayward mood, could scarcely be suspected of an influence like this. The scene was pregnant with astonishment and horror. I cannot, even now, recall it without reviving the dismay and confusion which I then experienced.

Possibly, the period will arrive when I shall look back without agony on the perils I have

undergone. That period is still distant. Solitude and sleep are now no more than the signals to summon up a tribe of ugly phantoms. Famine, and blindness, and death, and savage enemies, never fail to be conjured up by the silence and darkness of the night. I cannot dissipate them by any efforts of reason. My cowardice requires the perpetual consolation of light. My heart droops when I mark the decline of the sun, and I never sleep but with a candle burning at my pillow. If, by any chance, I should awake and find myself immersed in darkness, I know not what act of desperation I might be suddenly impelled to commit.

I have delayed this narrative longer than my duty to my friend enjoined. Now that I am able to hold a pen, I will hasten to terminate that uncertainty with regard to my fate in which my silence has involved thee. I will recall that series of unheard-of and disastrous vicissitudes which has constituted the latest portion of my life.

I am not certain, however, that I shall relate them in an intelligible manner. One image runs into another, sensations succeed in so rapid a train that I fear I shall be unable to distribute and express them with sufficient perspicuity. As I look back, my heart is sore and aches within my bosom. I am conscious to a kind of complex sentiment of distress and forlornness that cannot be perfectly portrayed by words, but I must do as well as I can. In the utmost vigor of my faculties, no eloquence that I possess would do justice to the tale. Now, in my languishing and feeble state, I shall furnish thee with little more than a glimpse of the truth. With these glimpses, transient and faint as they are, thou must be satisfied.

I have said that I slept. My memory assures me of this: it informs me of the previous circumstances of my laying aside my clothes, of placing the light upon a chair within reach of my pillow, of throwing myself upon the bed, and of gazing on the rays of the moon reflected on the wall and almost obscured by those of the candle. I remember my occasional relapses into fits of incoherent fancies, the harbingers of sleep. I remember, as it were, the instant when my thoughts ceased to flow and my

senses were arrested by the leaden wand of forgetfulness.

My return to sensation and to consciousness took place in no such tranquil scene. I emerged from oblivion by degrees so slow and so faint, that their succession cannot be marked. When enabled at length to attend to the information which my senses afforded, I was conscious for a time of nothing but existence. It was unaccompanied with lassitude or pain, but I felt disinclined to stretch my limbs or raise my eyelids. My thoughts were bewildering and mazy, and though consciousness was present, it was disconnected with the locomotive or voluntary power.

From this state a transition was speedily effected. I perceived that my posture was supine, and that I lay upon my back. I attempted to open my eyes. The weight that oppressed them was too great for a slight exertion to remove. The exertion which I made cost me a pang more acute than any which I ever experienced. My eyes, however, were opened; but the darkness that environed me was as intense as before.

I attempted to rise, but my limbs were cold, and my joints had almost lost their flexibility. My efforts were repeated, and at length I attained a sitting posture. I was now sensible of pain in my shoulders and back. I was universally in that state to which the frame is reduced by blows of a club, mercilessly and endlessly repeated; my temples throbbed, and my face was covered with clammy and cold drops, but that which threw me into deepest consternation was my inability to see. I turned my head to different quarters; I stretched my eyelids and exerted every visual energy, but in vain. I was wrapped in the murkiest and most impenetrable gloom.

The first effort of reflection was to suggest the belief that I was blind, that disease is known to assail us in a moment and without previous warning. Thus, surely, was the misfortune that had now befallen me. Some ray, however fleeting and uncertain, could not fail to be discerned if the power of vision were not utterly extinguished. In what circumstances could I possibly be placed, from which every particle of light should, by other means, be excluded?

This led my thoughts into a new train. I endeavored to recall the past; but the past was too much in contradiction to the present, and my intellect was too much shattered by external violence, to allow me accurately to review it.

Since my sight availed nothing to the knowledge of my condition, I betook myself to other instruments. The element which I breathed was stagnant and cold. The spot where I lay was rugged and hard. I was neither naked nor clothed: a shirt and trousers composed my dress, and the shoes and stockings which always accompanied these were now wanting. What could I infer from this scanty garb, this chilling atmosphere, this stony bed?

I had awakened as from sleep. What was my condition when I fell asleep? Surely it was different from the present. Then I inhabited a lightsome chamber and was stretched upon a down bed, now I was supine upon a rugged surface and immersed in palpable obscurity. Then I was in perfect health, now my frame was covered with bruises and every joint was racked with pain. What dungeon or den had received me, and by whose command was I transported hither?

After various efforts I stood upon my feet. At first I tottered and staggered. I stretched out my hands on all sides, but met only with vacuity. I advanced forward. At the third step my foot moved something which lay upon the ground. I stooped and took it up, and found, on examination, that it was an Indian tomahawk. This incident afforded me no hint from which I might conjecture my state.

Proceeding irresolutely and slowly forward, my hands at length touched a wall. This, like the flooring, was of stone, and was rugged and impenetrable. I followed this wall. An advancing angle occurred at a short distance, which was followed by similar angles. I continued to explore this clue, till the suspicion occurred that I was merely going round the walls of a vast and irregular apartment.

The utter darkness disabled me from comparing directions and distances. Thus discovery, therefore, was not made on a sudden, and was still entangled with some doubt. My blood recovered some warmth, and my muscles some elasticity, but in proportion as my

sensibility returned, my pains augmented. Overpowered by my fears and my agonies, I desisted from my fruitless search, and sat down, supporting my back against the wall.

My excruciating sensations for a time occupied my attention. These, in combination with other causes, gradually produced a species of delirium. I existed, as it were, in a wakeful dream. With nothing to correct my erroneous perceptions, the images of the past occurred in capricious combinations and vivid hues. Methought I was the victim of some tyrant who had thrust me into a dungeon of his fortress, and left me no power to determine whether he intended I should perish with famine, or linger out a long life in hopeless imprisonment. Whether the day was shut out by insuperable walls, or the darkness that surrounded me was owing to the night and to the smallness of those crannies through which daylight was to be admitted, I conjectured in vain.

Sometimes I imagined myself buried alive. Methought I had fallen into seeming death, and my friends had consigned me to the tomb, from which a resurrection was impossible. That, in such a case, my limbs would have been confined to a coffin, and my coffin to a grave, and that I should instantly have been suffocated, did not occur to destroy my supposition. Neither did this supposition overwhelm me with terror or prompt my efforts at deliverance. My state was full of tumult and confusion, and my attention was incessantly divided between my painful sensations and my feverish dreams.

There is no standard by which time can be measured but the succession of our thoughts and the changes that take place in the external world. From the latter I was totally excluded. The former made the lapse of some hours appear like the tediousness of weeks and months. At length, a new sensation recalled my rambling meditations, and gave substance to my fears. I now felt the cravings of hunger, and perceived that, unless my deliverance were speedily effected, I must suffer a tedious and lingering death.

I once more tasked my understanding and my senses to discover the nature of my present situation and the means of escape. I listened to

catch some sound. I heard an unequal and varying echo, sometimes near and sometimes distant, sometimes dying away and sometimes swelling into loudness. It was unlike any thing I had before heard, but it was evident that it arose from wind sweeping through spacious halls and winding passages. These tokens were incompatible with the result of the examination I had made. If my hands were true, I was immured between walls through which there was no avenue.

I now exerted my voice, and cried as loud as my wasted strength would admit. Its echoes were sent back to me in broken and confused sounds and from above. This effort was casual, but some part of that uncertainty in which I was involved was instantly dispelled by it. In passing through the cavern on the former day, I have mentioned the verge of the pit at which I arrived. To acquaint me as far as was possible with the dimensions of the place, I had hallooed with all my force, knowing that sound is reflected according to the distance and relative positions of the substances from which it is repelled.

The effect produced by my voice on this occasion resembled, with remarkable exactness, the effect which was then produced. Was I, then, shut up in the same cavern? Had I reached the brink of the same precipice and been thrown headlong into that vacuity? Whence else could arise the bruises which I had received but from my fall? Yet all remembrance of my journey hither was lost. I had determined to explore this cave on the ensuing day, but my memory informed me not that this intention had been carried into effect. Still, it was only possible to conclude that I had come hither on my intended expedition, and had been thrown by another, or had, by some ill chance, fallen, into the pit.

This opinion was conformable to what I had already observed. The pavement and walls were rugged like those of the footing and sides of the cave through which I had formerly passed.

But if this were true, what was the abhorred catastrophe to which I was now reserved? The sides of this pit were inaccessible, human footsteps would never wander into these recesses. My friends were unapprised of my forlorn

state. Here I should continue till wasted by famine. In this grave should I linger out a few days in unspeakable agonies, and then perish forever.

The inroads of hunger were already experienced; and this knowledge of the desperation of my calamity urged me to frenzy. I had none but capricious and unseen fate to condemn. The author of my distress, and the means he had taken to decoy me hither, were incomprehensible. Surely my senses were fettered or depraved by some spell. I was still asleep, and this was merely a tormenting vision; or madness had seized me, and the darkness that environed and the hunger that afflicted me existed only in my own dis-tempered imagination.

The consolation of these doubts could not last long. Every hour added to the proof that my perceptions were real. My hunger speedily became ferocious. I tore the linen of my shirt between my teeth and swallowed the fragments. I felt a strong propensity to bite the flesh from my arm. My heart overflowed with cruelty, and I pondered on the delight I should experience in rending some living animal to pieces, and drinking its blood and grinding its quivering fibres between my teeth.

This agony had already passed beyond the limits of endurance. I saw that time, instead of bringing respite or relief, would only aggravate my wants, and that my only remaining hope was to die before I should be assaulted by the last extremes of famine. I now recollected that a tomahawk was at hand, and rejoiced in the possession of an instrument by which I could effectually terminate my sufferings.

I took it in my hand, moved its edge over my fingers, and reflected on the force that was required to make it reach my heart. I investigated the spot where it should enter, and strove to fortify myself with resolution to repeat the stroke a second or third time, if the first should prove insufficient. I was sensible that I might fail to inflict a mortal wound, but delighted to consider that the blood which would be made to flow would finally release me, and that meanwhile my pangs would be alleviated by swallowing this blood.

You will not wonder that I felt some reluctance to employ so fatal though indispensable



a remedy. I once more ruminated on the possibility of rescuing myself by other means. I now reflected that the upper termination of the wall could not be at an immeasurable distance from the pavement. I had fallen from a height, but if that height had been considerable, instead of being merely bruised, should I not have been dashed into pieces?

Gleams of hope burst anew upon my soul. Was it not possible, I asked, to reach the top of this pit? The sides were rugged and uneven. Would not their projections and abruptness serve me as steps by which I might ascend in safety? This expedient was to be tried without delay. Shortly my strength would fail, and my doom would be irrevocably sealed.

I will not enumerate my laborious efforts, my alternations of despondency and confidence, the eager and unwearied scrutiny with which I examined the surface, the attempts which I made, and the failures which, for a time, succeeded each other. A hundred times, when I had ascended some feet from the bottom, I was compelled to relinquish my undertaking by the *untenable* smoothness of the spaces which remained to be gone over. A hundred times I threw myself, exhausted by fatigue and my pains, on the ground. The consciousness was gradually restored that, till I had attempted every part of the wall, it was absurd to despair, and I again drew my tottering limbs and aching joints to that part of the wall which had not been surveyed.

At length, as I stretched my hand upward, I found somewhat that seemed like a recession in the wall. It was possible that this was the top of the cavity, and thus might be the avenue to liberty. My heart leaped with joy, and I proceeded to climb the wall. No undertaking could be conceived more arduous than this. The space between this verge and the floor was nearly smooth. The verge was higher from the bottom than my head. The only means of ascending that were offered me were by my hands, with which I could draw myself upward so as, at length, to maintain my hold with my feet.

My efforts were undefeatable, and at length I placed myself on the verge. When this was accomplished, my strength was nearly gone. Had I not found space enough beyond this

brink to stretch myself at length, I should unavoidably have fallen backward into the pit, and all my pains had served no other end than to deepen my despair and hasten my destruction.

What impediments and perils remained to be encountered I could not judge. I was not inclined to forebode the worst. The interval of repose which was necessary to be taken, in order to recruit my strength, would accelerate the ravages of famine, and leave me without the power to proceed.

In this state, I once more consoled myself that an instrument of death was at hand. I had drawn up with me the tomahawk, being sensible that, should this impediment be overcome, others might remain that would prove insuperable. Before I employed it, however, I cast my eyes wildly and languidly around. The darkness was no less intense than in the pit below, and yet two objects were distinctly seen.

They resembled a fixed and obscure flame. They were motionless. Though lustrous themselves, they created no illumination around them. This circumstance, added to others, which reminded me of similar objects noted on former occasions, immediately explained the nature of what I beheld. These were the eyes of a panther.

Thus had I struggled to obtain a post where a savage was lurking and waited only till my efforts should place me within reach of his fangs. The first impulse was to arm myself against this enemy. The desperateness of my condition was, for a moment, forgotten. The weapon which was so lately lifted against my own bosom was now raised to defend my life against the assault of another.

There was no time for deliberation and delay. In a moment he might spring from his station and tear me to pieces. My utmost speed might not enable me to reach him where he sat, but merely to encounter his assault. I did not reflect how far my strength was adequate to save me. All the force that remained was mustered up and exerted in a throw.

No one knows the powers that are latent in his constitution. Called forth by imminent dangers, our efforts frequently exceed our most sanguine belief. Though tottering on the verge

of dissolution, and apparently unable to crawl from this spot, a force was exerted in this throw, probably greater than I had ever before exerted. It was resistless and unerring. I aimed at the middle space between those glowing orbs. It penetrated the skull, and the animal fell, struggling and shrieking, on the ground.

My ears quickly informed me when his pangs were at an end. His cries and his convulsions lasted for a moment and then ceased. The effect of his voice, in these subterranean abodes, was unspeakably rueful.

The abruptness of this incident, and the preternatural exertion of my strength, left me in a state of languor and sinking, from which slowly and with difficulty I recovered. The first suggestion that occurred was to feed upon the carcass of this animal. My hunger had arrived at that pitch where all fastidiousness and scruples are at an end. I crept to the spot. I will not shock you by relating the extremes to which dire necessity had driven me. I review this scene with loathing and horror. Now that it is past I look back upon it as on some hideous dream. The whole appears to be some freak of insanity. No alternative was offered, and hunger was capable of being appeased even by a banquet so detestable.

If this appetite has sometimes subdued the sentiments of nature, and compelled the mother to feed upon the flesh of her offspring, it will not excite amazement that I did not turn from the yet warm blood and reeking fibres of a brute

One evil was now removed, only to give place to another. The first sensations of fullness had scarcely been felt when my stomach was seized by pangs whose acuteness exceeded all that I ever before experienced. I bitterly lamented my inordinate avidity. The excruciations of famine were better than the agonies which this abhorred meal had produced.

Death was now impending with no less proximity and certainty, though in a different form. Death was a sweet relief for my present miseries, and I vehemently longed for its arrival. I stretched myself on the ground, I threw myself into every posture that promised some alleviation of this evil. I rolled along the pavement of the cavern, wholly inattentive to the

dangers that environed me. That I did not fall into the pit whence I had just emerged must be ascribed to some miraculous chance.

How long my miseries endured, it is not possible to tell. I cannot even form a plausible conjecture. Judging by the lingering train of my sensations, I should conjecture that some days elapsed in this deplorable condition, but nature could not have so long sustained a conflict like this.

Gradually my pains subsided, and I fell into a deep sleep. I was visited by dreams of a thousand hues. They led me to flowing streams and plenteous banquets, which, though placed within my view, some power forbade me to approach. From this sleep I recovered to the fruition of solitude and darkness, but my frame was in a state less feeble than before. That which I had eaten had produced temporary distress, but on the whole had been of use. If this food had not been provided for me I should scarcely have avoided death. I had reason, therefore, to congratulate myself on the danger that had lately occurred.

I had acted without foresight, and yet no wisdom could have prescribed more salutary measures. The panther was slain, not from a view to the relief of my hunger, but from the self-preserving and involuntary impulse. Had I foreknown the pangs to which my ravenous and bloody meal would give birth, I should have carefully abstained, and yet these pangs were a useful effort of nature to subdue and convert to nourishment the matter I had swallowed.

I was now assailed by the torments of thirst. My invention and my courage were anew bent to obviate this pressing evil. I reflected that there was some recess from this cavern, even from the spot where I now stood. Before, I was doubtful whether in this direction from this pit any avenue could be found; but, since the panther had come hither, there was reason to suppose the existence of some such avenue.

I now likewise attended to a sound, which, from its invariable tenor, denoted somewhat different from the whistling of a gale. It seemed like the murmur of a running stream. I now prepared to go forward and endeavor to move along in that direction in which this sound apparently came.

On either side, and above my head, there was nothing but vacuity. My steps were to be guided by the pavement, which, though unequal and rugged, appeared, on the whole, to ascend. My safety required that I should employ both hands and feet in exploring my way.

I went on thus for a considerable period. The murmur, instead of becoming more distinct, gradually died away. My progress was arrested by fatigue, and I began once more to despond. My exertions produced a perspiration which, while it augmented my thirst, happily supplied me with imperfect means of appeasing it.

This expedient would, perhaps, have been accidentally suggested, but my ingenuity was assisted by remembering the history of certain English prisoners in Bengal, whom their merciless enemy imprisoned in a small room, and some of whom preserved themselves alive merely by swallowing the moisture that flowed from their bodies. This experiment I now performed with no less success.

This was slender and transitory consolation. I knew that, wandering at random, I might never reach the outlet of this cavern, or might be disabled by hunger and fatigue from going farther than the outlet. The cravings which had lately been satiated would speedily return, and my negligence had cut me off from the resource which had recently been furnished. I thought not till now that a second meal might be indispensable.

To return upon my footsteps to the spot where the dead animal lay was a heartless project. I might thus be placing myself at a hopeless distance from liberty. Besides, my track could not be retraced. I had frequently

deviated from a straight direction for the sake of avoiding impediments. All of which I was sensible was, that I was travelling up an irregular acclivity. I hoped some time to reach the summit, but had no reason for adhering to one line of ascent in preference to another.

To remain where I was was manifestly absurd. Whether I mounted or descended, a change of place was most likely to benefit me. I resolved to vary my direction, and instead of ascending, keep along the side of what I accounted a hill. I had gone some hundred feet when the murmur, before described, once more saluted my ear.

This sound, being imagined to proceed from a running stream, could not but light up joy in the heart of one nearly perishing with thirst. I proceeded with new courage. The sound approached no nearer, nor became more distinct; but as long as it died not away, I was satisfied to listen and to hope.

I was eagerly observant if any the least glimmering of light should visit this recess. At length, on the right hand, a gleam, infinitely faint, caught my attention. It was wavering and unequal. I directed my steps towards it. It became more vivid and permanent. It was of that kind, however, which proceeded from a fire, kindled with dry sticks, and not from the sun. I now heard the crackling of flames.

This sound made me pause, or at least to proceed with circumspection. At length the scene opened, and I found myself at the entrance of a cave. I quickly reached a station, when I saw a fire burning. At first no other object was noted, but it was easy to infer that the fire was kindled by men, and that they who kindled it could be at no great distance.

1799

## Mary and Catherine Byles

MARY (1750-1832) and Catherine (1752-1837), daughters of the Reverend Mather Byles, poet, punster, and loyalist minister of the Brattle Street Church, in Boston, carried on an extended correspondence covering a period of half a century with relatives and friends, faithfully copied in a series of letter books. These give not only their own experiences and opinions but also a limited picture

of social life in Boston. Intense loyalists, they lived on memories of the British military occupation of Boston and of dancing with Lord Percy. On the accession of King William IV to the British throne in 1830, they wrote him a letter, signed "Your Majesty's loyal subjects." Catherine in particular was literary in her tastes and wrote mediocre verses, of which only a few have been preserved.

The famous "Dark Day" of 1780, never thoroughly explained, made a lasting impression on the memories of New England people. Compare the account given here with that by Whittier in "Abraham Davenport."

A brief account of the Byles sisters may be found in H. W. Eaton, *The Famous Mather Byles* (1914). The manuscript letter books are preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society Library, Boston.

#### LETTER TO MATHER BROWN

[*The Celebrated Dark Day of 1780*]

To Mather Brown,<sup>1</sup> at Cape François, Hispaniola.

Boston June 5, 1780

YOUR very entertaining Letter, my dear Mather, of the 18th of April, was brought us the 8th of May, by your Brother Gawen, who is a generous-spirited young Fellow, as we have largely experienced. It affords me the greatest Satisfaction, to hear of the safe Arrival of our *Run-away* to his destined Post. Pray be careful of your Health, especially be very cautious of exposing yourself to the Night Air, which has proved fatally prejudicial to young Americans. I want to know whether you did not wish yourself at Home, when you were so sea-sick & when you were in the hard Gale you speak of? Your Description of the Place, & Curiosities, is very pleasing; but should not *Monuments* be read *Stanzas*? We are much obliged for your Present, & have eat your Health in Salmon, but I beg you to consider that you have to maintain yourself, & must by no means exceed the Limits of your Purse. Do send me word when we are to see you in your Chariot & Six. As you have opportunity of hearing from Jamaica, do make some enquiries whether your Nurse Betty Healy is living & what her Situation is. We have had

some vague Accounts that Dr. C——<sup>1</sup> is there, if you can conveniently obtain any Intelligence of him, I know you will very much gratify the Deacon his Father. Come Aunt Kitty, take the Pen & write to your Nephew, for you see I have fill'd up one Page, & I feel quite tired.

[MARY BYLES]

Yes, with Pleasure, I will assume the Pen, to write to my old Correspondent. And now, what shall I say to my dear Mather? he Knows his Aunt tenderly loves him, & is greatly solicitous for his Happiness; assured of this, you must imagine me highly pleased with your Accounts of your short Passage, & present agreeable Situation. As your Aunt Polly on the other Page, has *particularly* answered your Epistle, there is nothing left for me to do, but to take it in *general*. Let me see then, what an abundance of eleven Things; *Johannes*,<sup>2</sup> Public Squares, Fountains, Piazzas, Monuments, Theatres, Sugar-Cane, Cocoa-Nuts, Pine-Apples, & Oranges, O charming! But, let me see again, Paper-Dollars, Thunder, Lightning, Gales of Wind, Broken-Masts, and Lost-Anchors, O dreadful! And you really seem to think that these things ballance the loss of Chumnes, & Glass-Windows. But now I, who know better declare I think Chumnes, & Glass-Windows, are very convenient Affairs, & affirm I had rather be seated between both, than to see the finest Cocoa-Nut (for you don't

<sup>1</sup> Brown, a painter, had gone to the West Indies to seek his fortune there. After 1780, he lived in England. The text of this letter follows closely the form of the original.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Benjamin Church, author of *The Choice* (see above, p 264), had been banished for his dealings with the British and probably lost at sea. <sup>3</sup> Portuguese coins, worth about \$8.50

tell me you *see* any) or to hear the most tempestuous Wind imaginable, even might I be twice as sea-sick as you were into the Bargain.—

In return for the extraordinary Curiosities you mention, I will give you the following Account of the most remarkable Phenomenon which happened here on the 19th of May, 1780. We rose, Breakfasted, and performed many Domestic Concerns as usual. About 10 o'clock the whole sky appeared exceedingly Yellow & and in half an Hour was attended with a Darkness, which increased so fast, as to oblige me by Eleven to thro' aside my work: The Inhabitants now took the Alarm, Business was laid by, & the Surrounding Shades engrossed all Conversation. The Animal world too seemed disordered; the Cows lowed, & returned Home; the Cocks Crew, and the cheerful Swallow, who was just before fluttering round my window, hung its Wing, & retreated for Shelter to its Nest. While Visitors, & Messages, from all parts of the Town, crowded round us, to enquire into the Cause of this Mysterious Change in the Face of Nature<sup>1</sup> The Gloom still gradually increased. Between One, and Two, we light a candle, & sat down to Dinner To give you some little Idea of the Affair; when the Darkness was at the Height, we were not only unable to distinguish those who walked the Streets, & to see the Figures on the Clock, but were equally unable to see even the Form of the Lanter; nor could I have discerned there had been one in the Room, tho' seated just by it, had I not before known it. Preceding the Darkness, the expanded Heavens appeared like burnished Brass, & the Fields were of the most beautiful Green I ever beheld; (I wished for your Pencil.) In short, the whole Scene was awfully Majestic. At three, the Shades gradually declined, & Day-Light again returned. The following Night, tho' the Moon was but just past the Fall, was equally solemn;

<sup>1</sup> Dr Byles sent one youngster home to his mother with the punning remark, "My dear, tell your mother I am as much in the dark as she is."

I would then stand at my window, & repeat those Lines of my favourite Young, which, I am sure, were never more applicable than at this Season.

Night, sable Goddess from her ebon Throne,  
In rayless Majesty, now stretches forth  
Her leaden Sceptre o'er a slumbering world.  
Silence, how dead! and Darkness, how profound!

Now Eye, nor list'ning Ear, an Object finds;  
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general Pulse  
Of Life stood still, and Nature made a Pause,  
An awful Pausel prophetic of her End.—

Thus much, for your miraculous Tree, planted by Columbus But, now I think of it, I have no Business to write any longer, as you sent me but half a Letter. Adieu, then, my dear Mather Write me as often, & as minutely as possible, where you are, how you feel, & what you think. For be assured I bear you much on my Heart, & wish to know your particular Circumstances, without Exaggeration, one Way, or other. Once more Adieu, & remember to pay all possible Attention to, & take particular Care of, the Health of my Nephew, for the sake of,

Your affectionate,  
K BYLES

I am sure you cannot complain now for want of a long letter, and as your Aunt Kitty has mentioned every thing Remarkable, I have nothing further to add; but that you omit no Opportunity of Writing, as it will give the greatest pleasure to,

Your equally affectionate,  
M BYLES

My dear Child,

Your Grandfather sends his Blessings, and the solemn Charge, 11 Tim. iii. 14. But ah! Poor Child! He has forgot to take his Bible with him. Do Polly write the Words. *But continue thou in the Things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.*

[K. BYLES]

1758 -- *Noah Webster* -- 1843

NOAH WEBSTER was one of the most many-sided of Americans. The son of a farmer at West Hartford, Connecticut, he was enabled to graduate at Yale in 1779, and after three years of teaching and law study was admitted to the bar in 1781 but practiced only a short time. In 1782, while teaching at Goshen, New York, he wrote his first textbook, a speller, later combined with a grammar and reader to form the *Grammatical Institute of the English Language*. Of the *American Spelling Book* 60,000,000 copies are estimated to have been sold within a century, and its influence in standardizing a distinctively American spelling, and to some extent pronunciation, was great. Incidentally, Webster personally gained very little income from his books and was always a poor man. To support himself while writing, he lectured, conducted singing schools, and did many other things. After 1794, disillusioned by the French Revolution, he turned from his earlier radicalism, in which he showed kinship with Tom Paine, to conservative Federalism. His agitation for an American copyright law led to the first Congressional legislation on that subject, and he always believed that his *Sketches of American Policy* (1785) was chiefly responsible for the constitutional form of government, involving checks and balances, adopted by the United States. In 1787-88 he conducted the *American Magazine* at New York, and from 1793 to 1803, a daily and a weekly newspaper there, supporting Federalist political views. His *Dissertations on the English Language* (1789) and his speculations with Franklin regarding a system of phonetic spelling (which he partly abandoned later) pointed the way to his great work as a maker of dictionaries. He was strongly nationalistic, and his *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* (1806) was calculated to set an American standard of pronunciation and meanings. The ridicule with which his Americanisms were greeted by his countrymen was a disappointment but did not deter him from pushing on to his great work, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1828. This, supplemented by the later work of Joseph E. Worcester, became the basis of lexicographical science in the United States. While living at Amherst, Massachusetts, from 1812 to 1822, he helped to found Amherst College.

Webster's literary work, an avocation with him, belongs to the 1780's and 1790's and consists chiefly of periodical essays in Connecticut newspapers, of which the "Prompter" series, published in 1791, was the most successful. His favorite type, based upon Franklin's *bagatelle*, "The Whistle," was the development of a practical or moral apothegm through several homely illustrations. For a time he had numerous imitators, among them Joseph Dennie, who acknowledged his indebtedness in the "Farrago" papers, but the type soon exhausted its restricted vogue.

The most recent biography, H. R. Warfel's *Noah Webster Schoolmaster to America* (1936), gives a good account of his activities and significance. See also H. E. Scudder, *Noah Webster* (1881); E. C. Shoemaker, *Noah Webster: Pioneer of Learning* (1936), with bibliography; and Emily E. F. Ford, *Notes on the Life of Noah Webster* (2 vols., 1912), with a bibliography. The last is edited by Emily E. F. Skeel, who is compiling an authoritative life and bibliography.

### From DISSERTATIONS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

#### [*A National Language*]

THE United States were settled by emigrants from different parts of Europe. But their descendants mostly speak the same tongue, and the intercourse among the learned of the different states, which the Revolution has begun and an American court will perpetuate, must gradually destroy the differences of dialect which our ancestors brought from their native countries. This approximation of dialects will be certain; but without the operation of other causes than an intercourse at court, it will be slow and partial. The body of the people, governed by habit, will still retain their respective peculiarities of speaking; and for want of schools and proper books, fall into many inaccuracies, which, incorporating with the language of the state where they live, may imperceptibly corrupt the national language. Nothing but the establishment of schools and some uniformity in the use of books can annihilate differences in speaking and preserve the purity of the American tongue. A sameness of pronunciation is of considerable consequence in a political view, for provincial accents are disagreeable to strangers and sometimes have an unhappy effect upon the social affections. All men have local attachments, which lead them to believe their own practice to be the least exceptionable. Pride and prejudice incline men to treat the practice of their neighbors with some degree of contempt. Thus small differences in pronunciation at first excite ridicule—a habit of laughing at the singularities of strangers is followed by disrespect—and without respect friendship is a name, and social intercourse a mere ceremony.

These remarks hold equally true with respect to individuals, to small societies, and to large communities. Small causes, such as a

nickname or a vulgar tone in speaking, have actually created a dissocial spirit between the inhabitants of the different states, which is often discoverable in private business and public deliberations. Our political harmony is therefore concerned in a uniformity of language.

As an independent nation, our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government. Great Britain, whose children we are and whose language we speak, should no longer be our standard, for the taste of her writers is already corrupted and her language on the decline. But if it were not so, she is at too great a distance to be our model and to instruct us in the principles of our own tongue.

It must be considered further that the English is the common root or stock from which our national language will be derived. All others will gradually waste away—and within a century and a half North America will be peopled with a hundred millions of men, all speaking the same language. Place this idea in comparison with the present and possible future bounds of the language in Europe—consider the eastern continent as inhabited by nations whose knowledge and intercourse are embarrassed by differences of language, then anticipate the period when the people of one quarter of the world will be able to associate and converse together like children of the same family. Compare this prospect, which is not visionary, with the state of the English language in Europe, almost confined to an island and to a few millions of people; then let reason and reputation decide how far America should be dependent on a transatlantic nation for her standard and improvements in language.

Let me add that whatever predilection the Americans may have for their native European tongues, and particularly the British descendants for the English, yet several circumstances render a future separation of the American

tongue from the English necessary and unavoidable. The vicinity of the European nations, with the uninterrupted communication in peace and the changes of domination in war, are gradually assimilating their respective languages. The English, with others, is suffering continual alterations. America, placed at a distance from those nations, will feel in a much less degree the influence of the assimilating causes, at the same time numerous local causes, such as a new country, new associations of people, new combinations of ideas in arts and science, and some intercourse with tribes wholly unknown in Europe, will introduce new words into the American tongue. These causes will produce in a course of time a language in North America as different from the future language of England as the modern Dutch, Danish, and Swedish are from the German or from one another, like remote branches of a tree springing from the same stock, or rays of light shot from the same center and diverging from each other in proportion to their distance from the point of separation.

Whether the inhabitants of America can be brought to a perfect uniformity in the pronunciation of words, it is not easy to predict; but it is certain that no attempt of the kind has been made, and an experiment, begun and pursued on the right principles, is the only way to decide the question. Schools in Great Britain have gone far towards demolishing local dialects—commerce has also had its influence—and in America these causes, operating more generally, must have a proportional effect.

1783

#### From THE PROMPTER

#### *He Does Not Work It Right*

WHAT a vulgar saying the Prompter has selected for his text in this number! Yet these vulgar sayings are often of good sense.

I knew a young man who left the army with an invincible attachment to gambling. He followed it closely till he had lost most of his wages; he then purchased a shop of goods, mostly on credit, he had his nightly frolics, *he kept it up*, he was a blood of the first rate; his goods were soon gone and not paid for; his creditors called and he began to cry *pecuni-*

in fact, *he did not work it right*. But his friends helped him out of six scrapes, yea out of seven. At length necessity broke his spirit; it tamed him; he married, became a man of business; recovered his lost credit; and now *he works it right*.

I often say to myself, as I ride about the country, what a pity it is farmers *do not work it right*. When I see a man turn his cattle into the street to run at large and waste their dung during a winter's day, I say this man does not work it right. Ten loads of good manure at least, are lost in a season by this slovenly practice; and all for what? For nothing indeed, but to ruin a farm.

So when I see cattle, late in the fall or early in the spring, rambling in a meadow or mowing field, poaching the soil and breaking the grass roots, I say to myself, this man *does not work it right*.

So when I see a barn yard with a drain to it, I say the owner does not work it right, for how easy is it to make a yard hollow, or lowest in the middle, to receive all the wash of the sides, which will be thus kept dry for the cattle. The wash of the yard, mixed with any kind of earth, or putrid straw, is the best manure in the world; yet how much do our farmers lose! In fact they *do not work it right*.

When I pass along the road and see a house with the clapboards hanging on end by one nail, and old hats and cloths stuffed into the broken windows, I conclude the owner loves rum; in truth, *he does not work it right*.

When I see a man frequently attending courts, I suspect he *does not work it right*.

When I see a countryman often go to the retailers with a bottle, or the laboring man carrying home a bottle of rum, after his work is done on Saturday night, I am certain the man *does not work it right*.

When a farmer divides a farm of 100 acres of land among five or six sons, and builds a small house for each and sets them to work for a living on a little patch of land, I question whether *he works it right*. And when these sons are unable to live on these mutilated farms, and are compelled by a host of children to go to work by the day to get bread, I believe they are all convinced that they *have not worked it right*.

When a man tells me his wife will not con-



sent to go from home into new settlements, where he may have land enough and live like a nabob, and therefore he is obliged to sit down on a corner of his father's farm, I laugh at him, and some time or other he will own, *he has not worked it right.*

A man in trade who is not punctual in his payments, certainly *does not work it right*; nor does the man who trusts his goods to *any body and every body.*

Whether in Congress or a kitchen, the person who *talks much is little regarded.* Some members of Congress then certainly *do not work it right.* A hint to the *wise* is sufficient; but twenty hints have not been sufficient to

silence the clamorous tongues of some congressional spouters.

Family government gives complexion to the manners of a town; but when we see, everywhere, children profane, indelicate, rude, saucy, we may depend on it their *parents do not work it right.*

I once knew a young man of excellent hopes, who was deeply in love with a lady. The first time he had an opportunity to whisper in her ear, and before he had made any impression on her heart in his favor, he sighed out his sorrowful tale to her, in full explanation. The lady was frightened, she soon rid herself of the distressed lover; she said, *he did not work it right.*

1791

## 1768 -- Joseph Dennie -- 1812

JOSEPH DENNIE, a native of Boston, occupies in the field of the essay in America a position analogous to that of Freneau in poetry, William Dunlap in the drama, and Charles Brockden Brown in the novel. At Harvard, his mental brilliancy, his gay and indolent disposition, and his outspoken criticism of mediocre instruction made a more favorable impression on his fellow students than on the faculty. The latter sent him into rustication for the final term of his senior year—a humiliation which doubtless affected his later lifelong criticism of American institutions and standards. During his next five years, 1790–1795, spent in desultory study and practice of law in Charlestown, New Hampshire, he attracted some attention with his clever series of newspaper essays, the “Farrago,” mostly printed in the *Dartmouth Centinel*, at Hanover. Another department of witty articles in the *Centinel*, in collaboration with the dramatist Royall Tyler, “From the Shop of Colon and Spondee,” was, according to Professor F. L. Pattee (*The First Century of American Literature*, p. 186), the first ancestor of the present-day newspaper “column.”

In 1795 he definitely turned to literature, projecting a small weekly literary miscellany, *The Tablet*, at Boston. Disappointed when this failed after a few months, he returned to New Hampshire and took over the editorship of the *Farmer's Weekly Museum*, at Walpole. This, featured by Dennie's new “Lay Preacher” essay series, the “Colon and Spondee” items, and the contributions of an unusual group of local writers, soon became the most widely circulated country paper in America. A militant Federalist, Dennie's clever and caustic jibes at Jefferson, Paine, and the Democrats also attracted the attention of hard-pressed Federalist leaders in the Adams administration, who invited him to Philadelphia in 1799 to act as a secretary

in the State Department but really to strengthen the editorial staff of the *Gazette of the United States*, the national organ of the Federalist party. After Jefferson's victory in 1800 and the removal of the capital to Washington, Dennie, in January, 1801, began editing as "Oliver Oldschool" a weekly literary magazine called the *Port Folio*. This, despite financial difficulties, the editor's bitter and futile opposition to the Jeffersonian administration, and his increasing ill-health, was the foremost American magazine until his death in 1812 and survived under several later editors until 1827. As at Walpole, Dennie attracted a considerable number of able supporters, including Joseph Hopkinson, Charles Brockden Brown, Tyler, and John Quincy Adams; from England, Thomas Moore, Thomas Campbell, and Leigh Hunt contributed to his pages. Dennie supplied a new series called the "American Lounger," and the personal column "An Author's Evenings," begun with Tyler in the *Museum* in 1799.

His criticisms, though sometimes prejudiced to the point of absurdity, were vigorous, forceful, and sincere. Although essentially neo-classic in literary theory, he was one of the earliest critics, British or American, to recognize the true merits of the *Lyrical Ballads*, "which," he said, "contains more genuine poetry than is to be found except in the volumes of Shakespeare and Chatterton" (*Port Folio*, December 21, 1801). Prompted by a sincere desire to improve the tastes, manners, and critical judgment of his country during an inchoate and unpolished era, he insistently praised British standards of excellence and lost no opportunity to lash American crudities, affectations, unfounded bumptiousness, and indifference to literature and the arts. Despite the antagonisms aroused, his influence upon younger writers like Irving (cf. *Salmagundi*) was strong and doubtless had its effect in the greater urbanity and restraint of the next generation.

The first complete collection of the "Lay Preacher" essays is being undertaken in the Rockland Editions by Milton Ellis. Two incomplete collections were published in 1796 (Walpole, New Hampshire) and 1817 (Philadelphia). The "Farrago" essays have never been collected. Dennie's *Letters*, edited by Mrs. Laura G. Pedder, were published in 1936 (University of Maine Studies, No. 36). The standard biography is *Joseph Dennie and His Circle* (Austin, Texas, 1915), by Milton Ellis. See also W. W. Clapp, *Joseph Dennie* (Cambridge, 1880); Annie Russell Marble, *Heralds of American Literature* (1907), 193-231, and G. F. Whicher's article on Dennie in *DAB*.

#### From THE FARRAGO ESSAYS

NO V<sup>1</sup>

#### [On Mathematics]

Our youth, proficient in a noble art,  
Divide a farthing to the hundredth part  
Well done, my boy, the joyful father cries,  
Addition and Subtraction make us wise.

FRANCIS

<sup>1</sup> First published probably in the *Morning Ray*, at

It would scarcely inform my readers to assure them that when I was at college, my mathematical tutor shook his head and dubbed me a stupid fellow. Whatever stress might be laid on the multiplication and pence tables by the sedate shopkeepers, it always appeared to me that a scholar could attain the object

Windsor, Vermont, in March or April, 1792; reprinted in the *Port Folio*, April 4, 1802.

of his mission to the university without any assistance from the four first rules. Hence I was more ashamed to be surprised solving a sum in Pike<sup>1</sup> than a reputed virgin would be to have the unchaste poems of *Rochester* plucked from her pillow. I contented myself with studying the ways of men and the works of Roman and English wits without gaping, with a foolish face of wonder, when told of the "Square of the Hypothenuse" and the miracles  
10 that compound interest would perform in a term of years. Geometrical progression was not half so delightful to me as vehicular progression in a crazy Charlestown-car.<sup>2</sup> That portion of arithmetic among merchants called fellowship, or company, I left to them to ascertain their shares of a cargo of sugar and molasses by; while the rules of good fellowship I made familiar both to my conception and practice. In fine, those of my prudent  
20 friends who observed the lankness of my purse, long before the expiration of a college term, merrily remarked that *reduction* was the only part of arithmetic in which I made a figure.

Thus avowed neglect of a darling study so offended the lovers of straight lines that every moment which they could steal from their diagrams, they employed in prognosticating my future fortune. They would sketch on the paper covers of *Euclid* perspective views of my dilapidated estate; and by rhombus, rhomboid, and trapezium—barbarous terms, such as are  
30 "a misery to hear" they would conjure away my goods and chattels. Those who, descending from the heights of abstraction, condescend to become mere mortals again and to converse upon sublunary topics, were continually quoting and applying to me that elegant adage of "bringing one's noble to a mumpence," &c.  
40 In vain I endeavored to defend my practice and to apologize for my disbelief in Euclid's infallibility. In vain I suggested that many of the brightest geniuses successfully clambered up the rugged steep of fame without employing the nine digits as pioneers to smooth the way; that Shakespeare, with whom, as

Cicero observed of Plato, I would rather err than think right with all the philosophers, was not only a novice in the doctrine of "nought and carry one," but frankly indulges a laugh of contempt at computation; that in *Othello*, when Iago informs his Venetian dupe of Cassio's unjust preferment to a lieutenancy, and is asked, "What is he?" the contemptuous response is, "Forsooth, a great arithmetician!" That in *Love's Labour's Lost*, a pert page demands of Armado, "How many is one thrice told?" the solemn knight replies, "I am ill at reckoning; it fits the spirit of a tapster"; that Lord Lyttelton the elder, a *man of business*, emphasizing the phrase, honored by his prince with a place in the exchequer and in the department of finance, could not, as we are assured by his son, count twenty pounds in different British coins, that the Dean of St. Patrick's, whose sterling sense and humor has pleased and informed men more than all the works of all the mathematicians, employed eight hours a day in reading historians and poets, and composing the *Tale of a Tub*, and was refused by the university of Dublin a degree, because he lampooned Locke and derided the aerial speculations of a mathematician. All these shining examples, like Haman's prosperity,<sup>1</sup> "availed me nothing,"  
50 and the sticklers for science told me that I could not give directions to a carpenter without understanding—how shall I write so unpoetical a word?—without understanding *parallelograms*.

Having thus far, in jocular phrase, discussed this *grave* subject, I now seriously declare it is not my wish to abrogate any branches of this recondite science. I am not possessed with such a Quixotish spirit of innovation as to desire all concerned forthwith to make proclamation for mathematics, and cousin-german arithmetic, to depart; but good-naturedly to deride that mode of education which, neglecting, or partially studying, eloquence, poetry, history, the classics, and the world, devotes long and exclusive attention to things abstracted and foreign from men's business and bosoms. That great and universal scholar, Dr. Johnson, whose authority is of no trivial weight, decisively pro-

<sup>1</sup> *A New and Complete System of Arithmetic* (Newburyport, 1788), by Nicholas Pike. <sup>2</sup> The "Farrago" essays were written mainly while Denme was living in Charlestown, New Hampshire.

<sup>1</sup> *Ether* 5 13

nounces that this science, and the knowledge which it requires and includes, is not the great and frequent business of life. It is of rare emergence. We are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance. One may live long with a man and not discern his skill in hydrostatics or astronomy, but his moral and prudential character immediately appears. The rigid Knox, who is a strenuous advocate for the severest school discipline, confesses that a man may be very liberally educated without much skill in this branch of learning. I remember reading, not many years since, a preface of Dr. Cheyne's to one of his medical tracts, wherein, after describing his devotion to triangles, &c., he pathetically deplores his waste of time, and adds "that in these exquisitely bewitching speculations, gentlemen of liberal leisure may riot, but for men of general learning, business, and the world, they are too empty and aerial." My readers will perhaps yawn at these multiplied citations, but this is a science supported so much by authority and opinion that I must oppose it with equal arms.

We are magisterially told that this study, of all others, most closely fixes the attention—an argument shallow, untrue, and easily vanquished. Any object that engrosses the mind will induce a habit of attention. Now, I can warrantably assert that a description from Virgil, a scene from Shakespeare, Robertson's narrative of the decollation of Mary, or any striking passage from authors of polite literature will accomplish this purpose. Why should the demonstrations of Euclid arrogate this honor solely to themselves? Have they an *exclusive privilege* of enchanting the mind, or are they invested with a *talismanic charm* by which attention is at once conjured into mathematical circles? Addison wondered how *rational* beings could for hours play with painted bits of paper, but he was manifestly a novice in whist, a game which, regularly played, is an unremitting exercise of two of the noblest intellectual powers, memory and judgment. The acute Hume, when jaded with metaphysical research, invigorated his powers with a cheerful *rubber*. From a fashionable amusement he derived that benefit which the worshippers of Euclid must confine to their God. In fine, a mere mathematician, without being a more

cogent reasoner, is less learned, less eloquent, and less courtly than the Beauclercs whose superficial talent he contemns. He is a solemn, absent, unaccommodating mortal. Better therefore to imitate Cardinal de Retz and Chesterfield; better to study the useful and the pleasant than to dream away life over the symbols and negative quantities of algebra.

I proposed to animadvert next on the influence that arithmetical minutiae gradually obtained over the heart. I was about adventuring to censure even the great Dr. Franklin for insisting too much upon the munt, anise, and cummin of computation. I wished to brand avarice and to deny the doctrine of "uttermost farthings." But I recollected that every penurious parent who prescribes, as a horn-book lesson to his son, that scoundrel maxim, "A penny saved is a penny got," would cry, "Shamel!" "The world," quoth Prudence, "will not bear it; 'tis a penny-getting, pound-hoarding world"—I yielded; and shelter myself in my garret against that mob of misers and worldlings I see gathering to hoot me.

1792

NO. XVI<sup>1</sup>*My Aunt Peg*

In the *Vicar of Wakefield* Dr. Goldsmith describes Burchell in company with a couple of courtesans assuming the manners and language of ladies of quality. The penetrating humorist, at the close of every sentence from these frail damsels, boasting intimacy with high life, emphatically and poignantly exclaims "Fudge!" When the ridiculous in manners or the insipid in conversation and life appears to *Tom Toledo*, whose nose is as curved as a fishhook by an inveterate habit of sneering, 'tis *Tom's* way to baptize the oddity—*my aunt Peg*.

Now, whether *my aunt Peg*, like Tristram Shandy's *aunt Dinah*, having been guilty of some backslidings in her youth, has forfeited her right to respect from the family; or whether certain envious prudes, as is their wont, have leagued, and look prim against her

<sup>1</sup> First printed in the *Eagle or Dartmouth Centinel*, Nahöwer, New Hampshire, March 3, 1794, reprinted in the *Port Folio*, August 29, 1801.

when she appears, is a question I cannot *readily* solve. Certain it is, she is degraded from the rank of gentlewoman and now keeps low and contemptible company.

My *aunt Peg*, like an English actress of sootied reputation, often exchanges the petticoats for breeches; and, disguised in male apparel, spouts farce and low comedy in the *theatre universal*. Though she "has her exits and her entrances" and "plays many parts," yet critical spectators are always dissatisfied with her style of acting; her assumed, cannot masquerade her real character, and pit, box, and gallery hiss "*aunt Peg*."

Sauntering last term into a court of justice, I mingled with "the swinish multitude" and figured to myself a union of law and eloquence in the charge to the jurors from the bench. The person speaking, for I actually mistook him for the judge resembling Sancho Panza in the island of Batavia, rather than Buller, Hale, or Talbot, I plucked *Taleo* by the sleeve and asked if his honor's name were not *Dogberry*. By St. Mansfield, he deserves, when time and place shall serve, to be "set down for an ass." "It is no judge"; says *Tom*, "that broad and vacant starrer is—my *aunt Peg*."

Dicky Dangler, the *ladies' man*, plays three hours with my cousin Charlotte's tumble and fancies that he is courting her. A wag in my neighborhood, a lover of *pepper-pots*, observing this frivolous "man of lath" with an unthrobbed pulse, gazing *sedately* on the eyes of a fine girl and praising her cherry lips without a wish to *press* them, swears that he is the very fribble of Shakespeare; that

"This is he,  
Who kissed away his hand in courtesy,  
This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,  
..... whom ladies call their sweet!"

And asks, in the phrase of Marlowe, if I shall suffer my cousin to live with him, and be his love. No. A contract of matrimony between *two females* is absurd and not good in law; for doubtless, Dicky is—my *aunt Peg*.

A literary friend, after a lonesome journey through a boorish quarter of the country, on his arrival at an inn, exults when the waiter informs him that the young fellow entering the room "has been to college." The con-

versation naturally turns upon books. Do you relish the *belles lettres*? Oh yes, I read *Rollin's belles lettres* last winter and liked them mightily. The indignant traveller frowned—he was unconscious that a degree in arts was frequently conferred on—my *aunt Peg*.

When I was at the university—I beg that the world would suppose I mean Oxford, Edinburgh, or Aberdeen, and not *our* college of Cambridge, for which I have a singular affection—if a lad were guilty of genius, a tribunal of tasteless tutors, professors, &c., would doom him to expulsion. "What," said they, "a man of genius in a college? It cannot, must not be.—Why Issachar," our strong ass couching down between his two burdens, Greek on one side and mathematics on the other, will bray and break bridle at the very sight of him." "Yes," says Candor, "their 'worships and their reverences' are, in very deed—my *aunt Peg*."

1794

#### From SPECIMEN OF THE SUBLIME IN AMERICAN COMPOSITION

The following extract from an article in the *Gazette of the United States*, April 29, 1800, illustrates Denny's attitude toward the inflated and bombastic language used by contemporary newspapers in dealing with national themes, and his insistence upon a restrained, classic style. His feeling regarding Americanisms, intensified by his residence in rural New Hampshire, is shown further in his hostile reception of Webster's first dictionary—"Noah's Ark"—with "its cargo of foul and unclean creatures."

The following is from [the] *New York Advertiser* and is the true and only style of writing popular and encouraged in America. If a scholar of the European model could forget his classical lore, throw away his taste, quench his imagination, falsify his judgment, and become a "motley fool, a miserable varlet," and write geographies, biographies, eulogies, &c. in the manner of the following, there is no doubt but he would bask in the broadest sunshine of success and be hailed a beautiful, patriotic, true American writer. If he should sit down, and in this style, compose a panegyric upon a

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 40:14. "Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between the sheepfolds."

certain country, proving it to be, "as far as words and terms can go," the most free, sovereign, and enlightened of any upon the globe, it would at once exalt and enrich the patriot author. He might be a governor of a state or a major general in the militia. "Blushing honors" would thicken about him; opulence would give him eagles by the handful; even the gripe of our pedlar avarice would relax and the Franklins of the time would tear out half a page of their economical diary. It is, therefore, modestly suggested, in a spirit of friendship and good will, that from and after the date hereof, the literary tribe in all our great national works assume the manner of the immortal writer below, a manner exactly suited to the meridian of the times; a manner that would rescue him who employed it from every imputation of servility to Roman or English combinations of style, a manner so fulsome, so stupid, so truly American as could not fail of delighting "millions." But it is ungenerous to keep impatient curiosity so long waiting in the ante-chamber. Without more delay, we introduce said curiosity to the famous

*New York Description of the Launch of the  
Frigate President*

Yesterday morning, at 10 o'clock precisely, the Daughter of the Forest and the Heir of the Ocean embraced in peerless Majesty her destined element. The order, beauty, grandeur, and godlike sublimity of the scene the pen of man cannot depict. The beholders alone can know the mingled sensations of pleasure, of joy, and of national glory that the scene exacted. The harbor on both sides for some distance was thronged with vessels, whose decks were covered with admiring beholders. The neighboring hills, housetops, and even the shores of Long Island were crowded with spectators whose acclamations echoed the Glory of America. Several artillery and volunteer companies, according to the arrangements of Gen. Hughes, paraded near the shore, and after she entered the water closed the scene with a *feu de joie*. On the whole we think it the most noble scene ever exhibited on this side the Atlantic. Her construction, timber, and workmanship reflect much honor upon her builders, and great merit is due to the judgment of Mr. Cheeseman, under whose

direction she moved with the most perfect ease and harmony, and with a noble bow, bade the land *Adieu* . . .

To a classical ear, nothing can be more dissonant than such jargon. To sound judgment and correct taste, nothing can be more offensive than such puerile tumidity. From simple narrative to vivid description, this extravagant, bloated style is too prevalent. Whatever is seen or heard is "unequaled," "wonderful," "vastly great," and "immensely prodigious." If a man die, then "a universe is in tears"; if a cannon explode, the world reverberates the deafening sound; if two or three are gathered together, it is an immense multitude, thronging and pressing; it is Milton's "numbers without number"; it fills and covers the whole earth. Now this bombast will answer very well for a town meeting bawler, anxious to gull the miserable populace, gaping to be instructed whether their natural baseness and malignity shall be employed to quench genius or to fire a city, to rip open a *feather-bag*, or unhead a *tar-barrel*. But it is too low and absurd and vicious to enter into any sentence of legitimate composition. It is to be hoped that from such specimens of style the whole of American authors will not be judged by transatlantic criticism.<sup>1</sup>

For there is a correct band in this country who to genius add taste, and to taste, judgment, and to judgment, skill in the various arts of pure and elegant composition. The individuals who compose this corps are not confined to the Eastern or the Southern States. They are sparsely to be found throughout our territory. To mention names would be invidious and improper, but such men are, who are incredulous to that quackish theory which

<sup>1</sup> Dennie's sensitiveness to British criticism of American stylistic crudenesses is expressed in his footnote: "A wretched, patchwork, Gallic, and corrupt style has long prevailed in our country. *It is not English*. But it is very current in the compositions of our editors, geographers, and pretence politicians. Every word and phrase in this new vocabulary is detected and branded at once by the British reviewers, whenever they notice a Columbian production of this class. They call it, in derision, an *Americoism*. It is original. It has no affinity to the manner of Addison, Swift, or Bolingbroke. It is a sort of revolutionary dialect, and was begotten and born in the month *Ventose*. It is the fashionable jargon of wittol editors and cloaked Jacobins."

would reject the study of the ancients and adopt as models of sentiment and language the reports of a French Convention. There are men of letters here who hold in utter contempt that paltry style which deforms so much of conversation and so much of writing. There are, who assiduously study their mother tongue in the purest English authors, and who are both solicitous and proud to copy the style of the Augustan age, whether to be referred to in Rome or Albion. This literary corps are wholly ignorant of that Indian idiom so much in vogue. They disclaim it. If patriotism and national vanity are to be gratified by talking and writing in this dialect, these men will make no such sacrifice. They will support the rights of common sense. They will adhere to the old, established, and approved modes of speech and will neither publish nonsense nor spell it in a new way, because the folly of the time and Dr. Franklin and his followers have sanctioned it.<sup>1</sup> . . .

"On the whole, we think it the most noble scene ever exhibited on this side the Atlantic" —Our poet is still in the upper region, and "with no middle flight intends to soar" The launch of a frigate is a pleasing spectacle, and so important an addition to our naval strength suggests agreeable images of national glory. All this is true, and in this it is natural and laudable to be interested. But it is not true that this is the most noble scene ever witnessed even on this side the Atlantic. It is a ludicrous exaggeration.

"She moved with the most perfect ease and harmony, and, with a noble bow, bade the land *Adieu*."—Our sublime poet, as if he had reserved all his strength till now, here appears giganically sublime:

"Greater he looks, and more than mortal stares,  
Who thus the wonders of the deep declares."

His ship, like the fabled Juno, is described with an eye to the "Aster ego" of Virgil

"She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen."

Still there is a visible mixture of the familiar with the supernatural, even in these lofty

images. It seems as if the bard were thinking of some pretty fellow taking leave of his mistress, or a powdered beau gliding gracefully through a ballroom and practising the retiring bow, just taught by the dancing master. Perhaps, however, he is here only availing himself of the figure ambiguity or unintelligible, of which he seems remarkably fond. A ship, if right we read our nautical dictionary, may have a bow, and if thus be the poet's meaning, his favorite may bid mother earth good-bye without any extraordinary extravagance, either of meaning or gesticulation. Perhaps also, in the fervor of his fancy, he has chosen to put into the hands of his ship a bow and arrows for the purpose of piercing some of the cursed pirates of the ocean, or as he is so much of an *enamorado* we may suspect he has in his eye part of the furniture of the god of love. The expression "noble bow" seems to support this solution, for as the poet is a man of reading, he might have recollected that beautiful and tender passage in the pedlar's ballad, commonly called "The Mournful Tragedy of Rosanna."

"Little Cupid bent his noble, noble bow  
Which left a fatal dart behind,  
That prov'd Rosanna's overthrow "

After having at some length, in a style of burlesque and banter, thus analysed this curious paragraph, it may seem impertinent to close the subject gravely. But the subject is of importance and deserves the sober consideration of all who aspire to write and converse with purity and simplicity. This paragraph was not selected for the purpose of exclusive animadversion. We have no particular spleen against this individual composition.

It was picked up from a mass of similar writings in America as a type of a very common, current, and utterly vicious style, at once the fashion and disgrace of the country. Criticism is useful and shall speak, though her voice "grate harsh thunder" to the ear of true patriots, bombastic editors, fustian orators, college boys, *et id genus omne*.<sup>1</sup> Our reproach and ridicule are intended to reform. America has indulged this rant too much. It is time it should be ridiculed and reasoned away. We must

<sup>1</sup> an allusion to Franklin's and Webster's simplified spelling, as in *parvity*

<sup>1</sup> this entire tribe

choose this day whom we will serve. We have the "Moses and the Prophets" of language. We have Dean Swift, Dr. Robertson, and Sir William Jones. We have, too, the miserable remnants of Cromwell's puritanism, the "Babylonish dialect" of "forefathers at Plymouth," the "red lattice phrases" of acquitted felons, and the "hissing hot" speeches from many a town meeting. Of these deformities let us be ashamed, and strive to emulate a diction pure, simple, expressive, and English.

#### From AN AUTHOR'S EVENINGS

Though Dennie himself would have been unfitted by his prejudices for such a task as he prepares for himself in an early issue of the *Port Folio*, his ideas of a competent history of the Revolution are in advance of the practice of his time

#### [An American History]

"For you  
I tame my youth to philosophic cares,  
And grow still paler by the midnight lamps"

In my projecting hours, which, by the by, occur pretty often and are not always followed up by immediate performance, I have long since resolved, if the author of my being protract its date until the age of forty, to sit down and write something like a History of the American Revolution. The topics would be high and various. The intrigues of our statesmen, the vicissitudes of war, the collision of party, and the state of letters. No work upon this plan has yet appeared. In Dodsley's *Annual Register*, conducted by Burke and Dr Campbell, men perused for a series of years a narrative such as might be expected, eloquent and elegant but often erroneous in facts, and varnished or obscured by the pencil of party. Of Gordon's history<sup>1</sup> it is sufficient to state that it was written by an acid zealot, of an acknowledged bias to a religious sect, and to a political patron. The book was, moreover, composed in a style of which Sir Roger L'Estrange, or Thomas D'Urfey, or Prynne the Puritan might have been ashamed. Dr. Ram-

say's popular volumes,<sup>2</sup> neatly and succinctly written, are obviously local, sententious, and imperfect. They are *miniature* pictures, sketched with a glowing, if not always a correct pencil. We have a mass of local and partial histories. Some beautiful in their language, others deplorably "stale, flat, and unprofitable", but all tediously minute in describing to posterity the petty squabbles of emigrants, infamous or obscure; the idle stories of a village legend, and the shades of difference between the cunning of the *gaol* and the *wigwam*. The mere title of the *Memoirs of Gen. Heath*<sup>3</sup> is sufficient to associate every idea of literary imbecility, bloated vanity, meager materials, and slovenly execution. A variety of flimsy, anonymous, and venal compilations abound, among others, a small *chapman's* book, *omnibus typis et tonsoribus notus*,<sup>4</sup> which is facetiously called *A History of the American War*, by Capt. John Lendrum. This is a broken, gazette narrative, in a style remarkably lean; and the name of Lendrum and the authority of the historian are supposed to be at least as genuine as that of Rabelais' Ding-dong, or Swift's Captain Lemuel Gulliver. Lieutenant Colonel Stedman's *History of the War*<sup>5</sup> is the most respectable narration which either American or British curiosity may peruse, or sober judgment weigh. The well-read author was the Iccius of Horace and happily combined the sometimes discordant qualities of the soldier and scholar Nay, although attached, from situation and principle, to the Royal cause, he is singularly impartial. But with all his advantages, the "*quorum pars fui*" personal knowledge of facts, the immunities of genius, and the honest aim of candor, still his work neither supersedes the history above projected, nor embraces the objects it should comprehend.

If, for example, the author should fix upon

<sup>1</sup> David Ramsay (1749-1813) of South Carolina, *History of the Revolution in South Carolina* (1785) and *History of the American Revolution* (1789) <sup>2</sup> William Heath (1737-1834) of Massachusetts, one of the least efficient of Washington's generals. He published his *Memoirs* in 1798. <sup>3</sup> A chapbook is a cheap small book for popular sale. The Latin phrase means "known to everybody" <sup>4</sup> Charles Stedman (1753-1813), a Virginia Loyalist. His *History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War* (2 vols., 1794), according to the article on Stedman in *DNB*, "still remains the standard work on the subject."

<sup>1</sup> William Gordon (1728-1807), *History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America* (4 vols., 1788), largely plagiarized from Dodsley's *Annual Register*



the date, progress, termination, and consequences of the Revolution, his narrative should date its chronology at a much earlier epoch than has been chosen by prior historians. He who would point to the accession of the third George, or to the peace of 1763, or who would describe the skirmish of Lexington in 1775 as the earliest materials for the initial chapters of a correct and philosophical history would leave inquiring mortals to grope their way, in palpable darkness, towards the true beginnings of an eventful quarrel. Yet this obscure and imperfect chronology has been assumed and followed. Latent and recondite sources of the Revolution have been unexplored. *Motives* have not been scrutinized. The characters of *patriots* have not been drawn.

Hence a secret history, hence private anecdote, and in a certain degree, the liberality and minuteness of the *memoir* style would not only interest curiosity but enlighten knowledge. Of the time adequate to the composition of such a laborious work, of the manner in which it will be finished, and of the period of its completion, it would be equally undecorous and unsafe for the writer to talk with confidence or anticipate with precision. It "demands many years of health, labor, and perseverance." It requires the collection of much oral and traditional information, the collation of many papers, the frequent visit to domestic archives, and perhaps a voyage over the Atlantic, and a visit to England.

1801

## 1780 ~ William Ellery Channing ~ 1842

BORN IN NEWPORT, Rhode Island, Channing was son of a father who represented the Presbyterianism of Princeton, but of a mother who came of liberal Harvard stock. After graduating at Harvard in 1798, he went as tutor to Richmond, Virginia, when overwork and ascetic habits undermined his health. Appointed a "regent" at Harvard, he studied theology and in 1803 was ordained minister of the Federal Street Church, Boston. Here, as his monument in the Boston Public Garden says, "He breathed into theology a humane spirit." His influential preaching, notably his famous sermon on Unitarian Christianity, at Baltimore in 1819, together with his "gracious, almost saintly character," made him a recognized leader among the Unitarian Congregational ministers of Boston. Although for over twenty years these ministers had filled the more influential pulpits in eastern New England, together with the seminary at Harvard, they objected to forming an independent sect. In 1808, however, the Trinitarian or Orthodox Congregationalists withdrew their support from Harvard and established their seminary at Andover; and in 1820 Channing organized the conference of liberal ministers, which in May, 1825, became the American Unitarian Association. The theological grounds for the separation of the Unitarians from Calvinistic orthodoxy are effectively set forth in his sermons and controversial writings, such as "The Moral Argument against Calvinism," first published in the *Christian Disciple*, in 1820.

Always a semi-invalid, in 1821 Channing took a long vacation, and on his return was assigned a colleague in his church. With greater freedom from then on, he was

able to give more of his time to that diversity of spiritual and social reforms which accompanied the intellectual and artistic movement often called the New England Renaissance. Objecting to a critical and rationalistic tendency within his sect, he urged a greater degree of spirituality and, as a friend and follower of Coleridge, he was largely responsible for the Unitarian contribution to the Transcendental movement of the 1830's. He pleaded for "a poetry which pierces beneath the exterior of life to the depths of the soul, and which lays open its mysterious working, borrowing from the whole outward creation fresh images and correspondences, with which to illuminate the secrets of the world within us." In his "Remarks on American Literature" (1830), he objected to the proneness of Americans to be influenced by English writers rather than being concerned with their own country. Always interested in politics as a moral issue, he helped to prepare New England for the abolition of slavery by a notable series of pamphlets. As a staunch pacifist, he preached against the War of 1812, and the Massachusetts branch of the American Peace Society was organized in his study. He was also a leader in the temperance movement in his century but believed its end should be accomplished by persuasion, not by legal enforcement.

Channing's works were published in 1903. Biographies are W. H. Channing's *Memoir* (1848, centenary edition 1880) and J. W. Chadwick's *William Ellery Channing, Minister of Religion* (1903). The *DAB* article is by Samuel McChord Crothers. For an excellent brief account of the Unitarian movement and Channing's part in it, see Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America*, Book V, Chs. III and IV. For his connection with Transcendentalism see C. H. Goddard in *CHAL* and C. H. Gohdes's *The Periodicals of Transcendentalism*. See also C. W. Eliot, *Four American Leaders* (1906); Elizabeth P. Peabody, *Reminiscences of Reverend William Ellery Channing* (1880); R. E. Spiller, "A Case for W. E. Channing," *New England Quarterly*, III, 55-81 (Jan., 1930), and C. H. Faust, "The Background of the Unitarian Opposition to Transcendentalism," *Modern Philology*, XXXV, 297-324 (1938).

#### From THE MORAL ARGUMENT AGAINST CALVINISM

Though first published as a review in *The Christian Disciple* in 1820, seventeen years after he entered the ministry, Channing's famous attack upon the early theology of New England is introduced here because the Unitarian movement had its origin in the later decades of the eighteenth century and was definitely established and exerted its enormous influence upon American thought and literature by the beginning of the nineteenth.

... This principal argument against Calvinism, in *The General View of Christian Doctrines*,<sup>1</sup> is the moral argument, or that which

<sup>1</sup> *A General View of the Doctrines of Christianity* (Boston, 1809), which Channing is reviewing

is drawn from the inconsistency of the system with the divine perfections. It is plain that a doctrine which contradicts our best ideas of goodness and justice cannot come from the just and good God, or be a true representation of his character. This moral argument has always been powerful to the pulling down of the strongholds of Calvinism. Even in the dark period when this system was shaped and finished at Geneva, its advocates often writhed under the weight of it; and we cannot but deem it a mark of the progress of society that Calvinists are more and more troubled with the palpable repugnance of their doctrines to God's nature, and accordingly labor to soften and explain them until in many cases the name only is retained. If the stern reformer of

Geneva could lift up his head and hear the mitigated tone in which some of his professed followers dispense his fearful doctrines, we fear that he could not lie down in peace until he had poured out his displeasure on their cowardice and degeneracy. He would tell them with a frown that *moderate Calvinism* was a solecism, a contradiction in terms, and would bid them in scorn to join their real friend, Arminius. Such is the power of public opinion 10 and of an improved state of society on creeds that naked, undisguised Calvinism is not very fond of showing itself, and many of consequence know imperfectly what it means. What view of Christian doctrines is directed?

Calvinism teaches that, in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit, God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt, so that they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually. It teaches that all mankind, having fallen in Adam, are under God's wrath and curse, and so made liable 20 to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. It teaches that from this ruined race God, out of his mere good pleasure, has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not induced to this choice by any foresight of their faith or good works, 30 but wholly by his free grace and love, and that, having thus predestinated them to eternal life, he renews and sanctifies them by his almighty and special agency and brings them into a state of grace, from which they cannot fall and perish. It teaches that the rest of mankind he is pleased to pass over, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the honor of his justice and power, in other words, he leaves the rest to the corruption in 40 which they were born, withholds the grace which is necessary to their recovery, and condemns them to "most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission in hell-fire for ever." Such is Calvinism, as gathered from the most authentic records of the doctrine. Whoever will consult the famous Assembly's Catechisms and Confession will see the peculiarities of the system in all their length and breadth of deformity. A man of plain 50 sense, whose spirit has not been broken to this

creed by education or terror, will think that it is not necessary for us to travel to heathen countries, to learn how mournfully the human mind may misrepresent the Deity.

The moral argument against Calvinism, of which we have spoken, must seem irresistible to common and unperverted minds, after attending to the brief statement now given. It will be asked with astonishment, How is it possible that men can hold these doctrines and yet maintain God's goodness and equity? What principles can be more contradictory?—To remove the objection to Calvinism, which is drawn from its repugnance to the Divine perfections, recourse has been had, as before observed, to the distinction between natural and moral inability, and to other like subtleties. But a more common reply, we conceive, has been drawn from the weakness and imperfection of the human mind, and from its incapacity of comprehending God. Calvinists will tell us that because a doctrine opposes our convictions of rectitude, it is not necessarily false, that apparent are not always real inconsistencies, that God is an infinite and incomprehensible being, and not to be tried by our ideas of fitness and morality, that we bring their system to an incompetent tribunal when we submit it to the decision of human reason and conscience, that we are weak judges of what is right and wrong, good and evil, in the Deity, that the happiness of the universe may require an administration of human affairs which is very offensive to limited understandings, that we must follow revelation, not reason or moral feeling, and must consider doctrines which shock us in revelation as awful mysteries, which are dark through our ignorance, and which time will enlighten. How little, it is added, can man explain or understand God's ways? How inconsistent the miseries of life appear with goodness in the Creator. How prone, too, have men always been to confound good and evil, to call the just unjust. How presumptuous is it in such a being to sit in judgment upon God, and to question the rectitude of the divine administration because it shocks 60 his sense of rectitude. Such we conceive to be a fair statement of the manner in which the Calvinist frequently meets the objection that his system is at war with God's attributes

Such the reasoning by which the voice of conscience and nature is stifled, and men are reconciled to doctrines which, if tried by the established principles of morality, would be rejected with horror. On this reasoning we purpose to offer some remarks; and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity to give our views of the confidence which is due to our rational and moral faculties in religion.

That God is infinite, and that man often errs, we affirm as strongly as our Calvinistic brethren. We desire to think humbly of ourselves, and reverently of our Creator. In the strong language of Scripture, "We cannot by searching find out God unto perfection. Clouds and darkness are round about him. His judgments are a great deep." God is great and good beyond utterance or thought. We have no disposition to idolize our own powers, or to penetrate the secret counsels of the Deity. But on the other hand, we think it ungrateful to disparage the powers which our Creator has given us, or to question the certainty or importance of the knowledge which he has seen fit to place within our reach. There is an affected humility, we think, as dangerous as pride. We may rate our faculties too meanly, as well as too boastingly. The worst error in religion, after all, is that of the skeptic, who records triumphantly the weaknesses and wanderings of the human intellect and maintains that no trust is due to the decisions of this erring reason. We by no means conceive that man's greatest danger springs from pride of understanding, though we think as badly of this vice as other Christians. The history of the church proves that men may trust their faculties too little as well as too much, and that the timidity which shrinks from investigation has injured the mind and betrayed the interests of Christianity as much as an irreverent boldness of thought.

It is an important truth, which, we apprehend, has not been sufficiently developed, that the ultimate reliance of a human being is and must be on his own mind. To confide in God, we must first confide in the faculties by which He is apprehended, and by which the proofs of His existence are weighed. A trust in our ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood is implied in every act of belief, for

to question this ability would of necessity unsettle all belief. We cannot take a step in reasoning or action without a secret reliance on our own minds. Religion in particular implies that we have understandings endowed and qualified for the highest employments of intellect. In affirming the existence and perfections of God, we suppose and affirm the existence in ourselves of faculties which correspond to these sublime objects, and which are fitted to discern them. Religion is a conviction and an act of the human soul, so that, in denying confidence to the one, we subvert the truth and claims of the other. Nothing is gained to piety by degrading human nature, for in the competency of this nature to know and judge of God all piety has its foundation. Our proneness to err instructs us indeed to use our powers with great caution, but not to condemn and neglect them. The occasional abuse of our faculties, be it ever so enormous, does not prove them unfit for their highest end, which is to form clear and consistent views of God. Because our eyes sometimes fail or deceive us, would a wise man pluck them out, or cover them with a bandage, and choose to walk and work in the dark? Or because they cannot distinguish distant objects, can they discern nothing clearly in their proper sphere, and is sight to be pronounced a fallacious guide? Men who, to support a creed, would shake our trust in the calm, deliberate, and distinct decisions of our rational and moral powers endanger religion more than its open foes, and forge the deadliest weapon for the infidel.

It is true that God is an infinite being, and also true that his powers and perfections, his purposes and operations, his ends and means, being unlimited, are *uncomprehensible*. In other words, they cannot be *wholly taken in or embraced* by the human mind. In the strong and figurative language of Scripture, we "know nothing" of God's ways, that is, we know *very few* of them. But this is just as true of the most advanced archangel as of man. In comparison with the vastness of God's system, the range of the highest created intellect is narrow; and in this particular, man's lot does not differ from that of his elder brethren in heaven. We are both confined in our observa-

tion and experience to a little spot in the creation. But are an angel's faculties worthy of no trust, or is his knowledge uncertain, because he learns and reasons from a small part of God's works? or are his judgments respecting the Creator to be charged with presumption because his views do not spread through the whole extent of the universe? We grant that our understandings cannot stretch beyond a very narrow sphere. But still the lessons which we learn within this sphere are just as sure as if it were indefinitely enlarged. Because much is explored, we are not to suspect what we have actually discovered. Knowledge is not the less real, because confined. The man who has never set foot beyond his native village knows its scenery and inhabitants as undoubtingly as if he had travelled to the poles. We indeed see very little, but that little is as true as if every thing else were seen, and our future discoveries must agree with and support it. Should the whole order and purposes of the universe be opened to us, it is certain that nothing would be disclosed which would in any degree shake our persuasion that the earth is inhabited by rational and moral beings, who are authorized to expect from their Creator the most benevolent and equitable government. No extent of observation can unsettle those primary and fundamental principles of moral truth which we derive from our highest faculties operating in the relations in which God had fixed us. In every region and period of the universe, it will be as true as it is now on the earth, that knowledge and power are the measures of responsibility, and that natural incapacity absolves from guilt. These and other moral virtues, which are among our clearest perceptions, would, if possible, be strengthened in proportion as our powers should be enlarged, because harmony and consistency are the characters of God's administration, and all our researches into the universe only serve to manifest its unity, and to show a wider operation of the laws which we witness and experience on earth.

We grant that God is *incomprehensible*, in the sense already given. But he is not therefore *unintelligible*; and this distinction we conceive to be important. We do not pretend to know

the *whole* nature and properties of God, but still we can form some *clear ideas* of him, and can reason from these *ideas* as justly as from any other. The truth is that we cannot be said to comprehend any being whatever, not the simplest plant or animal. All have hidden properties. Our knowledge of all is limited. But have we therefore no distinct ideas of the objects around us, and is all our reasoning about them unworthy of trust? Because God is infinite, his name is not therefore a mere sound. It is a representative of some distinct conceptions of our Creator, and these conceptions are as sure, and important, and as proper materials for the reasoning faculty as they would be if our views were indefinitely enlarged. We cannot indeed trace God's goodness and rectitude through the whole field of his operations, but we know the essential nature of these attributes, and therefore can often judge what accords with and opposes them. God's goodness, because infinite, does not cease to be goodness, or essentially differ from the same attribute in man, nor does justice change its nature, so that it cannot be understood, because it is seated in an unbounded mind. There have indeed been philosophers, "falsely so called," who have argued from the unlimited nature of God that we cannot ascribe to him justice and other moral attributes, in any proper or definite sense of those words, and the inference is plain that all religion or worship wanting an intelligible object must be a misplaced, wasted offering. Thus doctrine from the infidel we reject with abhorrence, but something not very different too often reaches us from the mistaken Christian who, to save his creed, shrouds the Creator in utter darkness. In opposition to both, we maintain that God's attributes are intelligible, and that we can conceive as truly of his goodness and justice as of these qualities in men. In fact, these qualities are essentially the same in God and man, though differing in degree, in purity, and in extent of operation. We know not and we cannot conceive of any other justice or goodness than we learn from our own nature, and if God have not these, he is altogether unknown to us as a moral being, he offers nothing for esteem and love to rest upon; the

objection of the infidel is just, that worship is wasted, "We worship we know not what."

It is asked, On what authority do we ascribe to God goodness and rectitude, in the sense in which these attributes belong to men, or how can we judge of the nature of attributes in the mind of the Creator? We answer by saying, How is it that we become acquainted with the mind of a fellow-creature? The last is as invisible, as removed from *immediate* inspection, as the first. Still we do not hesitate to speak of the justice and goodness of a neighbor, and how do we gain our knowledge? We answer, by witnessing the effects, operations, and expressions of these attributes. It is a law of our nature to argue from the effect to the cause, from the action to the agent, from the ends proposed and from the means of pursuing them, to the character and disposition of the being in whom we observe them. By these processes, we learn the invisible mind and character of man, and by the same we ascend to the mind of God, whose works, effects, operations, and ends are as expressive and significant of justice and goodness as the best and most decisive actions of men. If this reasoning be sound (and all religion rests upon it), then God's justice and goodness are intelligible attributes, agreeing essentially with the same qualities in ourselves. Their operation, indeed, is infinitely wider, and they are employed in accomplishing not only immediate but remote and unknown ends. Of consequence, we must expect that many parts of the divine administration will be *obscure*, that is, will not produce *immediate* good and an *immediate* distinction between virtue and vice. But still the unbounded operation of these attributes does not change their nature. They are still the same as if they acted in the narrowest sphere. We can still determine in many cases what does not accord with them. We are particularly sure that those essential principles of justice which enter into and even form our conception of this attribute, must pervade every province and every period of the administration of a just being, and that to suppose the Creator in any instance to forsake them, is to charge him directly with unrighteousness, however loudly the lips may compliment his equity.

"But is it not presumptuous in man," it is continually said, "to sit in judgment on God?" We answer that to "sit in judgment on God" is an ambiguous and offensive phrase, conveying to common minds the ideas of irreverence, boldness, familiarity. The question would be better stated thus—Is it not presumptuous in man to judge concerning God and concerning what agrees or disagrees with his attributes? We answer confidently, No; for in many cases we are competent and even bound to judge. And we plead first in our defense the Scriptures. How continually does God in his word appeal to the understanding and moral judgment of man "O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" We observe, in the next place, that all religion supposes and is built on judgments passed by us on God and on his operations. Is it not, for example, our duty and a leading part of piety to *praise* God? And what is praising a being, but to adjudge and ascribe to him just and generous deeds and motives? And of what value is praise, except from those who are capable of distinguishing between actions which exalt and actions which degrade the character? Is it presumption to call God *excellent*? And what is this but to refer his character to a standard of excellence, to try it by the established principles of rectitude, and to pronounce its conformity to them, that is, to judge of God and his operations?

We are presumptuous, we are told, in judging of our Creator. But he himself has made this our duty, in giving us a moral faculty, and to decline it is to violate the primary law of our nature. Conscience, the sense of right, the power of perceiving moral distinctions, the power of discerning between justice and injustice, excellence and baseness, is the highest faculty given us by God, the whole foundation of our responsibility, and our sole capacity for religion. Now we are forbidden by this faculty to love a being who wants, or who fails to discover,<sup>1</sup> moral excellence. God, in giving us conscience, has implanted a principle within us which forbids us to prostrate

<sup>1</sup> lacks, or fails to exhibit

ourselves before mere power, or to offer praise where we do not discover worth, a principle which challenges our supreme homage for supreme goodness, and which absolves us from guilt when we abhor a severe and unjust administration. Our Creator has consequently waived his own claims on our veneration and obedience, any farther than he discovers himself to us in characters of benevolence, equity, and righteousness. He rests his authority on the perfect coincidence of his will and govern-

ment with those great and fundamental principles of morality written on our souls. He desires no worship but that which springs from the exercises of our moral faculties upon his character, from our discernment and persuasion of his rectitude and goodness. He asks, he accepts, no love or admiration but from those who can understand the nature and the proofs and moral excellence. . . .

1820

~V~

*The  
Earlier  
Nineteenth  
Century*





## The Earlier Nineteenth Century

1820-1850

### I

The year 1820 may serve to mark the definite "arrival" of American literature, since in that and the following year were published Irving's completed masterpiece, *The Sketch Book*, Bryant's first volume of *Poems*, and Cooper's first successful novel, *The Spy*. These works, in three important fields, provided a prompt response to a part of Sydney Smith's sneering question in the *Edinburgh Review*, in January, 1820, "In the four quarters of the globe, who ever reads an American book, or goes to an American play, or looks at an American picture or statue?"

For the first time, literature in America was beginning to keep pace with its physical development, which was advancing with extraordinary swiftness. The fewer than ten million inhabitants in 1820 grew to more than twice as many in the next twenty-five years. In the meantime, Florida had been acquired from Spain in 1819, and the Texan republic was annexed in 1845. Further, the division of the Oregon territory in 1846, the conquest of California and the Southwest from Mexico in 1848, and the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 brought the domain of the United States to over three million square miles, fourth largest in the world. The fast-moving boundary of actual settlement within this vast area had by 1850 reached a line extending across upper Michigan and Wisconsin, central Iowa, eastern Nebraska and Kansas, and central Texas and the Indian Territory, as the present Oklahoma was then called, newly set apart as a permanent refuge for the dispossessed eastern tribes.

It was fortunate, perhaps, that the pioneer settlement of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys was accomplished by a fairly homogeneous stock in race, language, religion, and social and political ideals, whose differences were readily assimilated. In general the westward advance was along two roughly parallel fronts. The larger, which traversed the country from the Ohio valley to the Gulf and the Rio Grande, was that of the pioneer stock originating mainly in Virginia and the Carolinas, which had led in crossing the Appalachian ridges into Kentucky and Tennessee. Ranga, restless, and unlettered, excellent huntsmen and fighters, they drove the tribesmen before them and developed an agricultural society in the Southwest and in the southern counties of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and beyond the Mississippi in Missouri and Kansas. The later "Pike County" character, in John Hay's *Pike County Ballads* and the stories of Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and "John Phoenix," is perhaps rather a caricature than a portrait of this stock after its energy was mainly spent.

Slightly later, across the northern belt of the same Middle Western states and southern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, poured a stream of migration originating chiefly in New England, through upstate New York, where much of it had paused for a generation.<sup>1</sup> Shrewd organizers and builders, they started the Lake cities, built up industries, banks, and commerce, and transplanted a New England civilization in the Middle West. Schools and libraries sprang up wherever they went, and in many places colleges, such as Oberlin, Knox, Beloit, Lawrence, Wabash, Carleton, and Grinnell.

Foreign immigration, which had been relatively small and mainly British in origin, received enormous impetus after 1845 from the suppression of popular revolutionary movements in central Europe and a series of disastrous famine years in Ireland. The Germans, farmers and artisans, generally pushed on into the interior, where their thrift and energy contributed greatly to the economic upbuilding of the new country. With additions from the older Pennsylvania German stock, they gave to many portions of the Middle West a Teutonic flavor, and helped culturally to make Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, and Cleveland noteworthy musical centers. The Irish<sup>2</sup> settled in great numbers in Boston, New York, and other eastern industrial cities of which they greatly altered the later political and religious character.

Of great importance in westward expansion was the improvement of communications. The federal highway known as the Cumberland Road reached Wheeling, on the Ohio, in 1818, and pushed on slowly to the Mississippi. The 1820's and 1830's were the great period of a projected network of canals, promoted by the construction of the Erie Canal across New York, 1817-1825. They were soon superseded by the railroads, however, whose mileage by 1860 totalled 30,000, linking together all sections, but most effectively the industrial East and the grain- and cattle-producing West.

Manufactures, favored by fluctuating but continuous tariff protection, grew rapidly in the northeastern states as improved machinery and centralized plants increased their output. These factors, with the shift from native to foreign-born workers unprotected by labor laws, greatly changed the conditions in the early New England mills and partly justified unfavorable comparisons by slavery apologists with the labor system on the cotton plantations. By 1860 the value of manufactured products had caught up with that of agricultural products. Nevertheless the southern cotton crop had grown to the enormous proportions of 5,000,000 bales exported in 1860, mainly by water to English and New England mills. For a time Yankee ships rivalled those of Great Britain in the carrying of this and other commerce, but the British, by first taking advantage of the shift to steam, re-

<sup>1</sup> An excellent study of this migration is Louis K. Matthews' *The Expansion of New England* (Boston, 1909).

<sup>2</sup> Not to be confused with the Presbyterian Scotch-Irish of earlier immigration, from Northern Ireland.

gained the supremacy. During the clipper ship era, American commerce made great inroads into the Pacific trade with China and India, and after Commodore Perry's coup in 1854, with Japan.

## II

Politically, the period from 1815 to 1860 was one of continued Democratic control based upon the common interests of the South and West, interrupted only by two brief and ineffectual Whig administrations. The unwieldy majority of the Era of Good Feeling soon split along natural lines of interest, and a faction calling itself the National Republicans, with the remnant of the Federalists, secured the election by Congress of John Quincy Adams in 1824. Adams, like his father an able, incorruptible, and unpopular statesman, was last in the series of presidents representing the aristocracy of Virginia and Massachusetts who had governed the new country for fifty years. His defeat in 1828 by General Andrew Jackson, hailed as champion of the common people against the aristocrats, was the greatest political overturn between 1800 and 1860. Swept into office by the extreme Democrats of the West and the poorer citizenry of the South and Northeast, Jackson displaced numerous officeholders, disrupted the National Bank, and governed as far as possible in favor of the unpropertied classes. The informality of manners, laxness of political appointments, and bitter social and party feuds of his regime left their marks on subsequent American politics. Himself a real leader of men, with little training for the presidency, Jackson's successors throughout the entire century were, with the exceptions of Lincoln and Cleveland, men of relatively mediocre ability.

Van Buren, who followed Jackson, inherited the disastrous financial panic of 1837; and the Whigs, as the opposition now called themselves, were able to defeat him for re-election by aping the Jacksonian campaign tactics. The Democrat Polk, however, secured the election of 1844 on a frankly expansionist policy, and during his administration the United States proper, through annexation, the Mexican War, and amicable negotiation with Great Britain, reached practically its present extent. With the return of prosperity, the Democrats, except for the Taylor-Fillmore administration, remained in power until 1860. Political lines were frequently obscured by crosscurrents—anti-Masonic, anti-immigration, anti-Catholic, and anti-slavery. Both the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and the Nebraska Compromise of 1850 were believed by Northern and Southern leaders to have "settled" the slavery issue, but like later nonpolitical issues, such as women's rights, prohibition, and old-age security, it could not be kept out of politics.

For several decades after 1789, the balance of population and representation in Congress between free and slave states remained fairly even. The South, however, proved to be a geographical unit, to which profitable slave labor and the plantation system were restricted by nature. The admission of Texas in 1845 virtually ex-

hausted the possibilities of Southern—or at least, slave-state—expansion. But after 1830 the filling up of the Middle West and the West, enormously accelerated by German immigration and the discovery of gold in California in 1848, and the resulting clamor of the new territories for statehood, threw the old equilibrium out of balance. This, and the fact that the American System, with its protective tariff and “pork-barrel” appropriations for public improvements, chiefly communication, turned out greatly to the advantage of the North, while the exigencies of governing an increasing area and population tended to a centralization of government opposed to the Jeffersonian theory of states’ rights, drew the South into a defensive solidarity which shut off its constructive contribution to American political history for nearly a century. A series of irritants, including the nullification agitation of the 1820’s in South Carolina, the activities of abolitionist societies, the Fugitive Slave Law and the Underground Railroad, culminating in John Brown’s raid on the arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, led many Southerners and some Northerners to the conviction that secession and the formation of a separate union was the only ultimate solution. The most ominous sign of disunion, not fully appreciated at the time, was the division of the great Protestant sects into Southern and Northern branches, the Presbyterians in 1838, the Methodists in 1844, and the Baptists in 1845.

The period from 1820 to 1850, then, was one of futile attempts at adjustment of irreconcilable issues in rapidly changing conditions, in which the giant figures of Calhoun, Webster, and Clay were the chief protagonists. In the 1850’s, the moribund Whig party effected a fusion with the American or Native Son and the Free-Soil elements in a new opposition party under the name Republican. By adroit management the mutually antagonistic German and anti-immigrant Know-Nothing votes were brought into alliance at the same time that Lincoln’s political shrewdness alienated Southern support from Douglas, the Democratic leader; and the former found himself elected, as a minority candidate with an electoral majority, to the presidency of a divided country. In the ensuing war the Confederacy, despite heroic resistance and superior leadership, was defeated by the greater weight of armies which included many German and Irish regiments and by the better industrial and communication systems of the Union. President Lincoln, at first inexperienced, hesitant, and distrusted, rose to heroic proportions with the success of Northern arms and the Emancipation Proclamation, and was spared by martyrdom the inevitable bickerings and obloquy suffered by Washington and Wilson in similar situations. At the same time his assassination was a tragedy to the South, left devastated by war and saddled with a bewildered and unproductive free Negro population at the mercy of a vindictive and rapacious reconstruction. Thereafter, the memory of common participation in the war, with skillful use of the memory of Lincoln, bound the agricultural West for fifty years in political alliance with the industrial East, not always to the equal interests of both sections.

## III

As the introduction of power machines in industry stimulated manufactures, and steamboats, canals, and railroads took merchandise all over the country, the commercial class increased greatly in importance. Among influential inventions were the McCormick reaper in 1834, and Elias Howe's sewing machine, patented in 1846. The Morse electric telegraph was developed in 1844, and in 1866 Cyrus Field laid the Atlantic cable, establishing communication between the old and the new worlds. In the East greater differentiation of classes grew up as men were attracted from farms and small towns to the factory systems of large cities, where they no longer worked for themselves but for employers. Standards of living were raised, however, since manufactures made goods cheaper and more abundant. In the West, where farming was still the chief interest, less class cleavage appeared. Trading in land was profitable, and the discovery of gold caused a rush of adventurers to California and other regions. The South raised cotton and tobacco and remained preoccupied with these pursuits and with politics.

With the changing character of the population came changes in its interests. The new facilities for travel and intercommunication and the multiplication of newspapers and magazines served as civilizing agencies. Among leading reform movements of the period, the most absorbing was the abolition movement. Others concerned the prevention of war, the rights of the poor, the rights of women, prison reform, and temperance. The last-named movement was launched in 1826 in protest against the abuse of drinking and led to the formation of many "total abstinence" societies. The cultural life of the country was much influenced until after the Civil War by the lyceum, an institution that did much to spread knowledge. The earliest was established in Massachusetts in 1826, and in ten years the number increased to a thousand. The lyceum provided lectures, debates, concerts, and entertainments of other kinds, and enlightened its audiences on philosophical, literary, scientific, and educational matters. Through this agency Emerson broadcast his doctrine of self-reliance, which synchronized with the dominant individualism of the time.

Newspapers, magazines, and books played a larger and larger part in the life of the country as time passed. News features, diversified literary material, and humor broadened the old type of political journalism. Among leading newspapers the New York *Evening Post* was founded in 1801, the *Sun* in 1833, and the *Herald* in 1835, followed by the *Times* in 1841 and the *Tribune* in 1851. The *Springfield Republican*, most important of the smaller-city newspapers, was established in 1824. Weekly and monthly periodicals sprang up, addressed largely to feminine readers, over-sentimentalized in literary matter, and designed to foster elegance and refinement. *Godey's Lady's Book*, founded at Philadelphia in 1830, with its colored

fashion plates as a feature, had a large circulation as late as 1876. The *North American Review*, patterned after the great English reviews, was established as early as 1815 and long ranked as the most important magazine in the country. *The Dial*, of interest as the organ of the American transcendentalists, was issued from 1840 till 1844. Many of its contributors continued to confer literary distinction upon the *Atlantic Monthly*, established in 1857. *Harper's Magazine* began in 1850, with New York City as its home.

Education gradually widened its range. From colonial times the New England schools had been supported by the communities as civil institutions. In the other colonies the schools had been largely private and under the oversight of the churches. As democracy advanced, more free public schools depending upon local or state support were instituted alongside the private and religious schools. Horace Mann (1798-1859) was a notable reformer, who did much to modernize and liberalize the school system of Massachusetts, and his influence spread to other states. Under his stimulus superintendents were trained, support and equipment improved, and normal schools fostered. In connection with elementary schools, mention may be made of *McGuffey's Readers*, made for the first and second grades in 1836 and later for more advanced classes. These readers had enormous influence and, in revised form, are still in use here and there. The first half of the century saw the establishment of many academies for those who could not attend college or for the preparation of those who could do so. Colleges and universities likewise multiplied. The backbone courses in higher institutions included Greek and Latin, and sometimes Hebrew, a little science, and usually some theology. The older eastern institutions prepared largely for the professions and derived their students chiefly from the superior classes. In the new West everybody was eager for educational advantages. Schools and libraries were started early, and state universities established, which eventually were opened to women as well as men. Distinguished scientists of the period were Louis Agassiz the naturalist and Asa Gray the botanist, both at Harvard, and Benjamin Silliman in chemistry, at Yale. Among notables in the humanities were President James Marsh of the University of Vermont, whose educational reforms have not yet been completely superseded; and Professor Karl Follen and President C. C. Felton of Harvard, who introduced German university methods into America. Eminent economists were Thomas Cooper of the University of South Carolina and his successor Francis Lieber, later professor at Columbia. Henry R. Schoolcraft took conspicuous rank for his interest in western exploration and in Indian lore.

The large publishing houses had their homes, as they still do, on the eastern coast. Both authors and publishers were long handicapped by the lack of an adequate copyright law. Popular European books might be republished by any houses that wished them; native writers thus had no protection against the competition

of cheap pirated editions of works from abroad. No effective international copyright law protecting foreign and American books was passed until 1891.

Theaters and amusements gradually gained in popularity and standing. Stock companies arose in cities, and as traveling became easier, professional players, beginning about 1825, began to troupe through western circuits. Romantic dramas of European authorship were chiefly presented, but sometimes American plays, often dealing with historical figures and sometimes with Indian themes, were produced. Among the leading actors of the day were Edwin Booth, James H. Hackett, Edwin Forrest, William Macready, and Fanny Kemble. An English opera company sang in New Orleans in 1820, and Italian opera made its advent in New York City in 1825. As regards other forms of art, portrait painting and painting in the "grand style" continued, though artists of the distinction of Benjamin West, J. S. Copley, and Gilbert Stuart of the preceding period were lacking. The "back to nature" movement assumed considerable popularity among painters. Duncan Phyfe had deserved celebrity for beautiful craftsmanship in furniture, and Washington Allston won a name as a critic of art who promoted good taste. The architecture early favored was classical. Later a more decorated and elaborate type came into vogue.

#### IV

In an objective examination of pre-Civil War literature one is perhaps first struck with the fact that the ideas and points of view reflected are still primarily Anglo-Saxon. One is reminded that up to 1860, at least, the literate American population was still perhaps eighty per cent British in origin. A glance through Whitcomb's *Chronological Outlines of American Literature* reveals between 1820 and 1860 no name of importance in the field of pure letters that is not either British (English, Scottish, or Irish), Huguenot, or Dutch of several generations in an Anglo-Saxon environment. To deny the quality of being American to this literature or to brand it as imitative or colonial is accordingly simply to ignore the facts, particularly in view of the robust Americanism of Irving, Cooper, Bryant, and Emerson, to name no others. Nor do traces of influences that pervaded all literature in the English language, like that of Wordsworth, Byron, or Scott, indicate servile copying, any more than does any tradesman's fashioning his work to rival that of another workman more skillful in his own craft. Quite as common, in the generation after 1830, is imitation of the first three successful American writers, Irving, Cooper, and Bryant. In general, then, one finds in American literature of the time traits and ideas common to all other literature in English during the Romantic and early Victorian periods, with, to be sure, certain distinctive American features such as the implicit acceptance of democracy as the ideal political system, a certain expansiveness of physical outlook, a somewhat greater degree of puritanism than is found in Words-



worth, Crabbe, Tennyson, and Dickens, and the phenomenon of New England Transcendentalism—"Romanticism rooted in Puritan soil."

A second literary characteristic of the period is that widening of the American cultural horizon which has well been described as the Rediscovery of Europe. The self-consciousness of Americans between 1780 and 1830 is an evidence of the distance from European culture into which America had lapsed during a half-century of increasing national isolation. The eagerness with which American scholars and writers now sought and brought back the legendary lore, current thought, and artistic treasures of the Old World<sup>1</sup> is sometimes attributed to "escapism" or colonialism. Allowance must be made, of course, for the bareness and drabness of cultural life in a country busily engaged in material pursuits, but in what direction, one might ask, should the active American intellect have been expected to turn for enrichment? From the displaced Indian culture had been absorbed what it had to offer: the cultivation of maize, potatoes, and tobacco; the skirmish and ambush type of warfare; the powwow or convention method of conducting public business, emphasis upon outdoor life and organized physical prowess; and the habit of an unrevealing "poker-face" reserve in business and conversation. The Canadian and Spanish-American provinces and republics had little more to offer. Hence after the War of 1812 there was a zestful turning back to a rediscovered Europe. Ticknor, Everett, Bancroft, Motley, and Hedge studied at German universities; Emerson turned to Coleridge and the Orient; Irving went to England, Spain, and Germany; Cooper to France and Italy, Longfellow to Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, and Spain; Motley to the Netherlands, Hawthorne to England and Florence. In doing so they rendered pioneer service by enriching the American imagination, they re-established closer contact with European civilization, and in the end did much to break the fetters of cultural self-consciousness and inferiority.

This awakened interest in Europe in no way lessened the pervasive influence of democratic theory. Perhaps mid-nineteenth century American literature is chiefly distinguished from European by its underlying accepted assumption that a democratic republic is the best of possible governments, and that social and political equality is the ideal state of society. Travelers who were enthusiastic over the art, literature, and legends of Europe did not fail to comment upon the advantages of American freedom and equality of opportunity. The victory of the Jacksonians in 1828, together with the gradual elimination of religious, property, and other qualifications upon general manhood suffrage, went far to give practical effect to the democratic theory; and the increasing immigrant population, fleeing tyranny and lack of social and economic opportunity in Europe, greatly intensified it. Cooper, vacationing in France, turned out a series of "republican novels"; and Bryant, Emerson, and Thoreau hailed with sympathetic interest the revolutions

<sup>1</sup> For an intelligent study of this phase of our national experience, see O W Long, *Literary Pioneers* (1935)

in Spanish America, Greece, and Italy, and less successful insurrectionary movements in Hungary, Poland, Cuba, and elsewhere. By 1823 the United States government felt sufficiently confident of its strength and of the success of the democratic system to assume, in the Monroe Doctrine, responsibility for forbidding further attempts by European monarchies to subjugate free peoples anywhere on the American continent, an attitude never challenged except by the French monarchy in Mexico while we were embroiled in internal war in 1861.

Another marked trait of American literature has been a certain expansiveness, the reflection of the consciousness of vast national areas and resources and of the unbounded expectancy of the future greatness of the country. Irving, hardly a chauvinist, exclaimed in his introduction to *The Sketch Book* (1820) about America's "mighty lakes, like oceans of liquid silver; . . . her valleys teeming with wild fertility, her tremendous cataracts thundering in her solitudes; her boundless plains, waving with spontaneous verdure; her broad, deep rivers, rolling in solemn silence to the ocean; her trackless forests, where vegetation puts forth all its magnificence." This feeling finds expression also in Bryant's "The Prairies" and "Thanatopsis," in Longfellow's *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha*, and in Cooper's romances of the forest and plain. The assumption of a great future, shared by Emerson, Lowell, and Whitman, naturally took in most minds the form of an expansionist policy, of which our war of conquest in Mexico was another manifestation. Schemes for the acquisition of Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua were promoted at different times, and down to the very end of the century many Americans looked forward to the "annexation" of Canada as the natural culmination of the "manifest destiny" of America.

Closely allied with this was the vitally important presence of the western frontier in the thinking of all Americans. The period under discussion was that in which the hugest strides of westward migration were made and the greatest areas brought under man's control. The West still appealed to the imagination of the East as an opportunity to the energetic, a lure to the ne'er-do-well, an asylum to the unsuccessful and discouraged. In the literature of the time, this effect upon the national imagination was more important than the actual frontier itself. The realities of life in the newer settlements were less often depicted by American writers, except in nonliterary forms, such as Bryant's personal letters, than by critical and often antagonistic foreigners, whose sarcastic comments served to make Americans, including Westerners like John Hay, only more sensitive and conscious of their newness and rawness.<sup>1</sup> As Lowell, himself a pioneer in handling the American scene and speech, commented regarding early New England life, there was a need of imaginative distance:

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of British comment, consult Jane Mesick, *The British Traveler in America, 1785-1835* (1922)

Everything is near, authentic, and petty. There is no mist of distance to soften outlines, no mirage of tradition to give characters and events an imaginative loom. So much downright work was perhaps never wrought on the earth's surface as during the first forty years after the settlement. But mere work is unpicturesque and devoid of sentiment.<sup>1</sup>

Cooper and Simms, in dealing with their pioneers, huntsmen, and Indian fighters, threw around them such a veil of imagination, just as Mrs. Stowe and Whittier, in their writings, romanticized the American Negro. Hence the result, as in the case of Brackenridge's earlier *Modern Chivalry*, that frontier conditions are most often effectively treated by the humorists, like Artemus Ward, Sut Lovingood, and John Phoenix, mainly men of eastern upbringing who saw the new country objectively. It remained for the western-born Mark Twain to combine fact, humor, and sentiment in exactly the right proportions.

Puritanism, in its insistent moral tone and in its concern with reform issues, continued to influence American literature of the mid-nineteenth century. The Revolution was succeeded by a second wave of religious revivals which rivalled the Great Awakening and strengthened throughout the country the hold of the younger sects, in which the puritan element was strong. On the negative side, probably no literature in any period was ever more scrupulously clean than that of the United States from 1820 to 1850. Poe, whose works were chaste enough, was condemned by a generation which exacted purity in the lives as well as the writings of its authors—a generation to whom Byron and Burns were wicked, and Moore and DeQuincey decidedly naughty. Later, despite their merits, the frankness of Melville and Whitman caused them to be effectively ignored throughout their lifetimes. On the positive side, the puritan moral earnestness is evident in the stories of Hawthorne as contrasted with those of Poe, in Bryant as compared with Irving, and in Whittier's reforming zeal beside the quiet poise of Emerson. It was an era of social reforms in which the moral element was a dominating influence. The peace movement found Longfellow a quiet but sincere devotee. Margaret Fuller and Emerson championed the rights of women. Overshadowing all other issues was that of abolishing slavery, whose advocates, Whittier, Garrison, Lowell, and Mrs. Stowe, reveal in their intense moments all the moral fervor and often intolerant righteousness of the puritan in all ages.

After 1830 the literary ascendancy swung back from Philadelphia and New York to New England; and Boston, with neighboring Cambridge and Concord, became for half a century the nation's literary capital. In Massachusetts lived and wrote at the same time Emerson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Whittier, Lowell, Emily Dickinson, Holmes, and for a time, Melville. Here flourished also the influential *North American Review* and *Atlantic Monthly*, the enterprising publishing house of

<sup>1</sup> "New England Two Centuries Ago"

Ticknor and Fields, and Harvard University, which was still in most fields the pre-eminent American seat of learning. Small wonder that poor Poe, competing with this literary galaxy, dubbed it the Mutual Admiration Society. The literary prestige of New England abroad was doubtless helped by the large number of colleges and other cultural institutions which had been started in the Middle West with New England encouragement and capital, and in the South by the host of Yankee schoolteachers and lawyers, building upon the established reputation of Noah Webster's blue-backed spelling books. The extraordinary predominance of this section, however, at a time when the center of population and national development in general were moving westward, is explainable only as a part of that New England renaissance whose industrial aspects have already been commented on.

American literature from 1820 to 1850 was of course a part of the general romantic movement, and shared its common characteristics, plus those separately discussed above. Its most distinctive contribution was perhaps the phenomenon called New England Transcendentalism. This may be loosely defined as a manifestation of practical idealism—in some cases more practical, in others more ideal—which matured in Cambridge and Concord about 1836, chiefly under the leadership of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who four years earlier had resigned his pastorate at the Second Church (Unitarian), Boston. Others of the transcendentalist group, including William Ellery Channing himself, were also Unitarian clergymen who, unsatisfied with the religious liberation brought about by their sect, were eager for a greater degree of social amelioration, spiritual living, and intellectual cultivation. Another source of transcendentalism was the idealistic philosophy of the German Kant as transmitted in the writings and conversation of Coleridge and of Carlyle, the poetry of Wordsworth, and the eclectic philosophy of the Frenchman Cousin. The experimental freedom inherited from the American and French revolutions was also a factor in their thinking, and the frontier was not too distant for its vague suggestiveness to have a quickening effect upon the group. Along with these went some of the moral earnestness and zeal for reform of their puritan ancestors. The result was a spirit of enthusiastic receptivity and eagerness for spiritual and intellectual exploration beyond, or *transcending*, the bounds of ordinary concerns and accepted views of life, which either enkindled or mystified the minds of their contemporaries. Some of the transcendentalists, like Emerson and Thoreau, were chiefly interested in a freer and higher way of the inward life of the individual, others like Margaret Fuller, Curtis, and Ripley, in a better state of social living, others like Alcott and Elizabeth Peabody, in better ideals of education; others, like Hedge, Hawthorne, Brooks, and Dwight Sullivan, in advancement of the arts and literature; and still others, like Channing and Sylvester Judd, in a more spiritual religion. All were eager, fresh, and individual in their views, and their combined

effect was one of quickening and vitalizing the literature and thought of their time and broadening its cultural horizon. Lowell, never an enthusiastic transcendentalist, bears witness to this. Even after their joint undertakings, *The Dial* magazine and the community living at Brook Farm, were dispersed, they continued as individuals to contribute actively to the religious, social, political, and artistic life of their country.

New York City enjoyed a brief primacy in letters between the death of Dennie at Philadelphia in 1812 and the rise of the transcendentalists at Cambridge in 1836, with the Irvings, Cooper, Paulding, Halleck, and Drake, and the lesser Knickerbockers. Bryant and Willis joined the group and were its chief literary ornaments during the mid-century. Later, Melville, Whitman, and Poe were for a time associated with the city. Hartford witnessed a new group of Connecticut wits about 1830, including J. G. Percival, J. A. Hillhouse, Carlos Wilcox, and Lydia H. Sigourney. Philadelphia was important mainly as a dramatic center and as the seat of *Graham's*, *Sartain's*, and *Godey's*, with which Poe was connected. At Baltimore flourished a group comprising J. P. Kennedy, F. S. Key, W. C. Pinkney, the novelist John Neal, and others. West of the Alleghenies, Cincinnati and Lexington were the first cultural centers of importance.

Perhaps the most interesting group outside of Boston was that which flourished in the decade before the Civil War, in Charleston, South Carolina. This city was the literary capital of the lower Old South, whose brittle economic and social aristocracy rested upon Greek and Old Testament sanctions, while the chivalric romances of Sir Walter Scott furnished the external ideals for its spirit and manners. Here a coterie of writers of distinction kept alive the *Southern Review* and *Russell's Magazine* and created a considerable output of romantic verse and prose exhibiting the characteristics of lyrical sweetness, beauty, and delicate sentiment in dealing with themes of nature, chivalric adventure, and idealized womanhood, fused with a haunting melancholy which marks most Southern literature from Richard Henry Wilde to Lanier. Paul H. Hayne, Henry Timrod, and William G. Simms were the principal members of the group, whose hopes and activities were mainly snuffed out by the devastation resulting from the War.

1783 ~ *Washington Irving* ~ 1859

WASHINGTON IRVING, the chief contribution of the city of New York to American literature, was born of British parents whose devotion to their adopted country, symbolized in his name, foreshadowed the combination in him of loyal American sentiment with a leavening of cosmopolitanism. A sunny but delicate lad, he was favored by his parents and talented older brothers, he roamed through the Hudson valley, attended Dunlap's playhouse surreptitiously, was excused from entering Columbia, studied law in a leisurely fashion, and enjoyed the privilege of a two years' journey to the Mediterranean countries and England in 1804-06. Already the author of a periodical essay series in the New York *Morning Chronicle* signed "Jonathan Oldstyle," reminiscent of Joseph Dennie's "Oliver Oldschool," he became on his return the leading spirit in a group of literary youths who turned out between January, 1807, and January, 1808, the twenty numbers of *Salmagundi*, the cleverest periodical papers yet produced in America. In 1809 he finished perhaps his most distinctive work, the comic *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, begun with his brother Peter as a burlesque of a guidebook to New York. The next few rather aimless years were spent partly in desultory writing, associate-editing two literary magazines, and social visits to Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Albany, ostensibly to look after legal interests of the family cutlery business. In 1815, at the close of the war with England, he left New York to share the responsibility for the branch of the firm maintained by his brother Peter in England, not then expecting to remain long abroad. By 1818, when the bankruptcy of the firm threw him upon his own resources, his geniality, good manners, and eager interest in letters had made him intimate and welcome among English writers like Scott, Campbell, and Jeffrey. *The Sketch Book* of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. (1819-1820), published simultaneously in England and America, won him popularity, financial competence, and literary reputation in both countries. The years from 1820 to 1826 were spent mainly in Germany, France, and Austria, while he continued the vein of *The Sketch Book* in *Bracebridge Hall* (1822) and *Tales of a Traveller* (1824). A sojourn of three years in Spain next produced *A History of the Life and Voyages of Columbus* (1828), *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (1829), and the later Spanish sketch book, *The Alhambra* (1832). After two more years as secretary to the American legation in London, he was ready in 1831 to return to enjoy the acclaim of his fellow countrymen. His remaining years were deservedly happy, spent after 1836 mainly at his residence, Sunnyside, at Tarrytown, on the Hudson. His early popularity was now augmented by the fact that more than any other American he had compelled a willing recognition of American literature in Europe.

A tour of the southwestern states and territories in 1832 and a connection with the house of John Jacob Astor resulted in three profitable books dealing with frontier America, *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835), *Astoria* (1836), and *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville* (1837). The literary work of his last years was largely biographical, including *Oliver Goldsmith* (1849), *Mahomet and His Successors* (1849-1850), and *The Life of George Washington* (1855-1859). In 1842, his leisure was interrupted by four years' service as minister to Spain. He died at Sunnyside, November 28, 1859.

The importance of Irving's work as a writer is almost overshadowed by his services as literary ambassador and as the foremost interpreter of England and the Continent to Americans, in the nineteenth-century rediscovery of Europe. His rare cosmopolitanism, by instinct as well as background, in a period of increasing national isolation, fitted him well to be the spokesman to England of an America which was still essentially Anglo-Saxon in most of its traditions and thinking. His urbanity, friendly interest and curiosity, and frank reverence for everything that was worthy of reverence in European tradition, combined with a proper degree of national pride and self-respect free from bumptiousness, won him the warm friendship of Scott and other Englishmen. Thus he gained for his own works an unbiased acceptance on their merits, and through them a reluctant recognition of the worth of Bryant, Cooper, and later Americans. This service was most important because of the generally contemptuous attitude of British criticism and the irritable sensitiveness of Americans which Irving deplored in "English Writers on America," and also because of the fact that British criticism was necessarily to some extent a yardstick for American cultural achievement.

In many ways Irving's spirit is that of late eighteenth-century English literature. In him sentiment, melancholy, humanitarian sympathy, and interest in the past and in nature were combined with and restrained by rationality and an active sense of humor. In his early work the humor was rampant and attended with a robust vein of coarseness, also native to the eighteenth century, which shows repeatedly in *Knickerbocker's History* and is excellently blended with humor, sentiment, and intrigue in the comedy *Charles II* (with John Howard Payne). Nothing, perhaps, is more characteristic of him than his handling of German romantic legend, in the emergence of humor at the close of tales of horror and the supernatural like "The Spectre Bridegroom" and "Adventure of the German Student."

His affections were instinctive rather than emotional, and his patriotism, while loyal, was not ebullient. He was no party man. Belonging by class to the Federalist group, he ridiculed the noisiness and bad manners of adherents of the popular party, and the erudition and pacifism of President Jefferson; but he was friendly with the Madisons and regarded himself as a "Jackson man" after his return to the United States in 1832. Putting friendship always before politics, he wrote to his

friend Brevoort in 1811, "I have associated with both parties—and have found worthy and intelligent men in both—with honest hearts, enlightened minds, generous feelings and bitter prejudices." His friendship with Southerners also kept him from taking an active stand regarding the current issues of nullification and slavery.

Irving was not a literary theorist, though he exaggerated when he wrote to Brevoort, "I do not read criticism, good or bad." To be a critic did not harmonize with Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.'s consistent pose of the detached observer, sympathetic but amused and somewhat languid, which had been passed on by many predecessors like the Spectator, the Looker-On, the Idler, and the American Lounger. Early in his career he wrote for the *Analectic Magazine* reviews of two American poets, R. T. Paine, Jr., and E. C. Holland, in the acid and reactionary vein of contemporary British criticism, but they were not written *con amore*, and he did not revert to the type. Usually, as in the six literary essays in *The Sketch Book*, he is "the honest bee, that extricates honey from the humblest weed," as he describes the sympathetic critic representing his ideal, in his late essay "Desultory Thoughts on Criticism" (1839). With himself, he was more exacting, discarding much manuscript and revising his grammar and diction rigorously. As to language, aside from his humorous work, he was a purist, objecting to the Wordsworthians' use in poetry of "common colloquial phrases and vulgar idioms, . . . coarse and commonplace," and to the "heterogeneous taste . . . gorgeous material . . . mingled up with . . . the most grotesque" in the prose of Leigh Hunt.

Irving was gifted with a prose style remarkable for ease, naturalness, and charm, already well developed in the Mustapha letters in *Salmagundi* (1807), and needing only maturing under the influence of his expanding interest in English and German romanticism and the setting, history, and legends of Spain and the Moors. He recognized that style was the chief quality of his work, writing in 1823, "I wish . . . to write in such a manner that my productions may have more than the mere interest of narrative to recommend them, . . . something, if I dare use the phrase, of classic merit, i.e., depending upon style, etc., which gives a production some chance for duration beyond the mere whim and fashion of the day." To the American short story he contributed several important tales but nothing by way of development. His most important piece of self-criticism, an oft-quoted letter to his friend Henry Brevoort, December 11, 1824, expresses both his concept of the type and his ideals of composition in it:

For my part I consider a story merely as a frame on which to stretch my materials. It is the play of thought and sentiment and language, the weaving in of characters, lightly yet expressively delineated, the familiar and faithful exhibition of scenes in common life; and the half-concealed vein of humor that is often playing through the whole—these are what I aim at, and upon which I felicitate myself



in proportion as I think I succeed. . . . I have preferred a mode of sketches and short tales rather than long works, because I choose to take a line of writing peculiar to myself. . . . and there is a constant activity of thought and nicety of execution required in writings of this kind, more than the world appears to imagine. . . . [In] these . . . every page must have its merit.

Sharing with Hawthorne and Longfellow a strong antiquarian interest, Irving felt the lack of historical background in America. The Hudson valley offered nearly two centuries of Dutch occupancy, but it was an alien and somewhat thin tradition, which he enjoyed but found difficult to take otherwise than humorously. The English Puritan tradition of New England which became Hawthorne's *milieu* he disliked heartily; and though he sentimentalized the "red man" much as Freneau and Cooper did, the forest and prairie devoid of human history did not appeal to him as a setting for story or essay. Hence his *Tour on the Prairies* is a piece of good reporting that lacks the underlying interest of "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Artistically he was more at home in the Moorish castles of Spain and in the manor houses of England, some of whose flavor he was able to instill into his residence, Sunnyside, where he spent his last years.

The standard edition is *The Works of Washington Irving* (21 vols., 1860-61). The twelve-volume Spuyten Duyvel Edition (1881) contains the same text and is more easily accessible. The best volume of selections, with a valuable introduction and bibliography, is H. A. Pochmann's *Washington Irving*, in the American Writers Series (1934). Editions of separate works include Edwin Greenlaw's (1919) and S. T. Williams and Tremaine McDowell's (1927) *Knickerbocker's History of New York*; W. R. Langfeld's *The Poems of Washington Irving* (1931); S. T. Williams and Barbara D. Simson's *Washington Irving on the Prairies or A Narrative of a Tour in the Southwest* (1937). W. R. Langfeld has compiled *Washington Irving: A Bibliography* (1933), with descriptive annotations. For criticism and biography before 1917, see *CHAL*, I, 510-517.

The standard life is Stanley T. Williams, *Washington Irving* (2 vols., 1935). All the biographies go back in large part to Pierre M. Irving's *Life and Letters of Washington Irving, by his Nephew* (4 vols., 1862-64). A revised and condensed People's Edition of this work in 3 vols. was issued in 1869. Other biographies include G. S. Hellman, *Washington Irving, Esquire: Ambassador at Large from the New World to the Old* (1925); D. J. Hill, *Washington Irving* (1879); H. W. Mabie, *The Writers of Knickerbocker New York* (1912); R. H. Stoddard, *Life of Washington Irving* (1883); and C. D. Warner, *Washington Irving*, in American Men of Letters Series (1881). The *Journals*, edited by W. P. Trent and G. S. Hellman (3 vols., 1919), do not include a considerable number of diaries and other manuscript notes subsequently edited by S. T. Williams in a number of separate volumes, for which see the current issues of the *PMLA* supplement. G. S. Hellman edited an important series of *Letters of Henry Brevoort to Irving* and *Letters from Irving to Henry Brevoort* (both 1918). The *DAB* article is by Stanley T. Williams, that in *CHAL* by G. H. Putnam.

For other critical and biographical studies, see Stockton Axson, "Washington Irving and the Knickerbocker Group," *Rice Institute Pamphlets*, XX, 178-195 (April, 1933); E. W. Bowen, "The Place of Irving in American Literature," *Sewanee Review*, XIV, 171-183 (1906); H. W. Boynton, "Irving," in *American Writers on American Literature*, edited by John Macy (1931); Wallace Bruce, *Along the Hudson with Washington Irving* (1913); Richard Burton, "Irving's

Services to American History," *New England Magazine*, N.S. XVI, 641-653 (1897); W. B. Cairns, *British Criticism of American Writings, 1815-1833* (1922); H. S. Canby, *Classic Americans* (1931), 67-96, and *The Short Story in English* (1913); L. G. Clark, "Recollections of Washington Irving," *Lippincott's Magazine*, III (1869); E. A. Duyckinck, ed., *Irvingiana a Memorial of Washington Irving* (1860); E. Goggio, "Washington Irving and Italy," *Romanic Review*, XXI, 26-33 (January-March, 1930); Edwin Greenlaw, "A Comedy in Politics," *Texas Review*, April, 1916 (satire on Jefferson in the *Knickerbocker History*); A. Keiser, *The Indian in American Literature*, 52-64 (1933); J. G. Lockhart, "On the Writings of Charles Brockden Brown and Washington Irving," *Blackwood's*, VI (1820); John Macy, *The Spirit of American Literature* (1913), 18-34; G. D. Morris, *Washington Irving's Fiction in the Light of French Criticism*, *Indiana University Studies*, No. 30 (May, 1916); V. L. Parrington, *The Romantic Revolution in America, 1800-1860* (1927), 203-212; F. L. Pattee, *The Development of the American Short Story* (1923), 1-26; W. M. Payne, *Leading American Essayists* (1910), 40-134; H. A. Pochmann, "Irving's German Sources in the *Sketch Book*," *Studies in Philology*, XXVII, 477-507 (July, 1930), and "Irving's German Tour and Its Influence on His Tales," *PMLA*, XLV, 1150-1187 (December, 1930); J. A. Russell, "Irving, Recorder of Indian Life," *Journal of American History*, XXV, 185-195 (1931); M. R. Small, "A Possible Ancestor of Diedrich Knickerbocker," *American Literature*, II, 21-24; F. P. Smith, "Washington Irving, the Fosters, and Some Poetry," *American Literature*, IX, 228-232 (May, 1937); R. E. Spiller, *The American in England* (see index, 1926); C. Webster, "Irving's Expurgations of the 1809 *History of New York*," *American Literature*, III, 293-305; Mary Zirkle, "Meeting in the West," *Christian Science Monitor*, XXIX, 14 (March 20, 1937).

Several important studies by S. T. Williams, not listed, are now embodied in his *Washington Irving* (2 vols., 1935).

### From SALMAGUNDI

One of the chief ingredients of the *Salmagundi's* bill of fare was a series of letters from an imaginary Tripolitan detained in New York in connection with the war with the Barbary pirates, in which Mustapha records his judgments of the Americans. The device, borrowed, of course, from Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World" letters of a Chinese observer in London, gave Irving an opportunity for witty and ironical satire upon the faults of his countrymen. In this essay their fondness for wordy debate and the bitterness of partisan newspaper warfare are chiefly ridiculed. In the concluding section, the satire is directed against President Jefferson's peace measures during the Napoleonic wars and his ineffectual attempts to secure the protection of American neutral rights by means of addresses to the warring nations. Two years later, Irving carried this anti-Jeffersonian satire to greater lengths in Book IV of *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, in the person of Governor William Kieft (See S. T. Williams and Tremaine McDowell, introduction to their edition of the *History in the American Authors Series* [1927], pp. lxvii-lxxxi).

### [A Logocracy]

LETTER FROM MUSTAPHA RUB-A-DUS KELL KHAN TO ASEM HACCIEM, PRINCIPAL SLAVE-DRIVER TO HIS HIGHNESS THE BASHAW OF TRIPOLI

I PROMISED in a former letter, good Asem, that I would furnish thee with a few hints respecting the nature of the government by which I am held in durance. Though my inquiries for that purpose have been industrious, yet I am not perfectly satisfied with their results, for thou mayst easily imagine that the vision of a captive is overshadowed by the mists of illusion and prejudice, and the horizon of his speculations must be limited indeed. I find that the people of this country are strangely at a loss to determine the nature, and proper character of their government. Even their dervises are extremely in the dark as to this particular, and are continually indulging in the most preposterous disquisitions on the subject, some have insisted that it savors of an aristocracy; others maintain that it is a pure

democracy; and a third set of theorists declare absolutely that it is nothing more or less than a mobocracy. The latter, I must confess, though still wide in error, have come nearest to the truth. You of course must understand the meaning of these different words, as they are derived from the ancient Greek language, and bespeak loudly the verbal poverty of these poor infidels, who cannot utter a learned phrase without laying the dead languages 10 under contribution. A man, my dear Asem, who talks good sense in his native tongue, is held in tolerable estimation in this country, but a fool who clothes his feeble ideas in a foreign or antique garb, is bowed down to as a literary prodigy. While I conversed with these people in plain English, I was but little attended to, but the moment I prosed away in Greek, every one looked up to me with veneration as an oracle.

Although the dervises differ widely in the particulars above mentioned, yet they all agree in terming their government one of the most pacific in the known world. I cannot help pitying their ignorance, and smiling, at times, to see into what ridiculous errors those nations will wander, who are unenlightened by the precepts of Mahomet, our divine prophet, and uninstructed by the five hundred and forty-nine books of wisdom of the immortal 30 Ibrahim Hassan al Fusti. To call this nation pacific! Most preposterous! it reminds me of the title assumed by the sheik of that murderous tribe of wild Arabs that desolate the valleys of Belsaden, who styles himself "Star of Courtesy—Beam of the Mercy-Seat."

The simple truth of the matter is, that these people are totally ignorant of their own true character; for, according to the best of my observation, they are the most warlike, and I 40 must say, the most savage nation that I have as yet discovered among all the barbarians. They are not only at war, in their own way, with almost every nation on earth, but they are at the same time engaged in the most complicated knot of civil wars that ever infested any poor unhappy country on which Allah has denounced his malediction!

To let thee at once into a secret, which is unknown to these people themselves, their 50 government is a pure unadulterated *logocracy*,

or government of words. The whole nation does everything *viva voce*, or by word of mouth; and in this manner is one of the most military nations in existence. Every man who has what is here called the gift of the gab, that is, a plentiful stock of verbosity, becomes a soldier outright, and is forever in a militant state. The country is entirely defended *vi et lingua*, that is to say, by force of tongues. The account which I lately wrote to our friend, the 10 snorer, respecting the immense army of six hundred men, makes nothing against this observation, that formidable body being kept up, as I have already observed, only to amuse their fair countrywomen by their splendid appearance and nodding plumes, and are, by way of distinction, denominated the "defenders of the fair."

In a logocracy thou well knowest there is 20 little or no occasion for firearms, or any such destructive weapons. Every offensive or defensive measure is enforced by wordy battle and paper war, he who has the longest tongue or readiest quill is sure to gain the victory—will carry horror, abuse, and ink-shed into the very trenches of the enemy, and, without mercy or remorse, put men, women, and children to the point of the *quill*—pen!

There is still preserved in this country some 30 remains of that Gothic spirit of knight-errantry which so much annoyed the faithful in the middle ages of the Hegira. As, notwithstanding their martial disposition, they are a people much given to commerce and agriculture, and must necessarily at certain seasons be engaged in these employments, they have accommodated themselves by appointing knights, or constant warriors, incessant brawlers, similar to those who, in former ages, 40 swore eternal enmity to the followers of our divine prophet. These knights, denominated editors or *slang-whangers*, are appointed in every town, village, or district, to carry on both foreign and internal warfare, and may be said to keep up a constant firing "in words." O my friend, could you but witness the enormities sometimes committed by these tremendous *slang-whangers*, your very turban would rise with horror and astonishment. I have seen them extend their ravages even into the kitchens of their opponents, and annihilate

late the very cook with a blast; and I do assure thee, I beheld one of these warriors attack a most venerable bashaw, and at one stroke of his pen lay him open from the waist-band of his breeches to his chin!

There has been a civil war carrying on with great violence for some time past, in consequence of a conspiracy among the higher classes to dethrone his highness, the present bashaw, and place another in his stead. I was mistaken when I formerly asserted to thee that this dissatisfaction arose from his wearing red breeches. It is true, the nation have long held that color in great detestation, in consequence of a dispute they had some twenty years since with the barbarians of the British islands. The color, however, is again rising into favor, as the ladies have transferred it to their heads from the bashaw's—body. The true reason, I am told, is that the bashaw absolutely refuses to believe in the deluge, and in the story of Balaam's ass, maintaining that this animal was never yet permitted to talk except in a genuine logocracy; where, it is true, his voice may often be heard, and is listened to with reverence, as "the voice of the sovereign peoole." Nay, so far did he carry his obstinacy, that he absolutely invited a professed antediluvian from the Gallic empire,<sup>1</sup> who illuminated the whole country with his principles—and his nose. This was enough to set the nation in a blaze—every slang-whanger resorted to his tongue or his pen, and for seven years have they carried on a most inhuman war, in which volumes of words have been expended, oceans of ink have been shed, nor has any mercy been shown to age, sex, or condition. Every day have these slang-whangers made furious attacks on each other and upon their respective adherents; discharging their heavy artillery, consisting of large sheets loaded with scoundrell villain! liar! rascall! numskull! nincompoop! dunderhead! wiseacre! blockhead! jackass! and I do swear, by my beard, though I know thou wilt scarcely credit me, that in some of these skirmishes the grand bashaw himself has been wofully pelted! yea, most ignominiously pelted! and yet have these talking desperadoes escaped without the bastinado!

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Paine

Every now and then a slang-whanger who has a longer head, or rather a longer tongue than the rest, will elevate his piece and discharge a shot quite across the ocean, leveled at the head of the emperor of France, the king of England, or, wouldst thou believe it, O Asem, even at his sublime highness the bashaw of Tripoli! These long pieces are loaded with single ball, or language, as tyrant! usurper! robber! tiger! monster! and thou mayest well suppose they occasion great distress and dismay in the camps of the enemy, and are marvelously annoying to the crowned heads at which they are directed. The slang-whanger, though perhaps the mere champion of a village, having fired off his shot, struts about with great self-congratulation, chuckling at the prodigious bustle he must have occasioned, and seems to ask of every stranger, "Well, sir, what do they think of me in Europe?" This is sufficient to show you the manner in which these bloody, or rather windy fellows fight, it is the only mode allowable in a logocracy or government of words. I would also observe that their civil wars have a thousand ramifications.

While the fury of the battle rages in the metropolis, every little town and village has a distinct broil, growing like excrescences out of the grand national altercation, or rather agitating within it, like those complicated pieces of mechanism where there is a "wheel within a wheel."

But in nothing is the verbose nature of this government more evident than in its grand national divan, or Congress, where the laws are framed, this is a blustering, windy assembly, where everything is carried by noise, tumult, and debate; for thou must know that the members of this assembly do not meet together to find wisdom in the multitude of counselors, but to wrangle, call each other hard names, and hear themselves talk. When the Congress opens, the bashaw first sends them a long message, i.e., a huge mass of words—*vox et præterea nihil*, all meaning nothing, because it only tells them what they perfectly know already. Then the whole assembly are thrown into a ferment and have a long talk about the quantity of words that are to be returned in answer to this message; and here arise many disputes about the correction and

alteration of "if so be's" and "how so ever's." A month, perhaps, is spent in thus determining the precise number of words the answer shall contain, and then another, most probably, in concluding whether it shall be carried to the bashaw on foot, on horseback, or in coaches. Having settled this weighty matter, they next fall to work upon the message itself, and hold as much chattering over it as so many magpies over an addled egg. This done, they divide the message into small portions, and deliver them into the hands of little junteos of talkers, called committees, these junteos have each a world of talking about their respective paragraphs, and return the results to the grand divan, which forthwith falls to and retalks the matter over more earnestly than ever. Now after all, it is an even chance that the subject of this prodigious arguing, quarreling, and talking is an affair of no importance, and ends entirely in smoke. May it not then be said, the whole nation have been talking to no purpose? The people, in fact, seem to be somewhat conscious of this propensity to talk, by which they are characterized, and have a favorite proverb on the subject, viz, "all talk and no cider"; this is particularly applied when their Congress, or assembly of all the sage chatterers of the nation, have chattered through a whole session in a time of great peril and momentous event, and have done nothing but exhibit the length of their tongues and the emptiness of their heads. This has been the case more than once, my friend, and to let thee into a secret, I have been told in confidence, that there have been absolutely several old women smuggled into Congress from different parts of the empire, who, having once got on the breeches, as thou mayest well imagine, have taken the lead in debate, and overwhelmed the whole assembly with their garrulity, for my part, as times go, I do not see why old women should not be as eligible to public councils as old men who possess their dispositions, they certainly are eminently possessed of the qualifications requisite to govern in a logocracy.

Nothing, as I have repeatedly insisted, can be done in this country without talking; but they take so long to talk over a measure that by the time they have determined upon adopt-

ing it, the period has elapsed which was proper for carrying it into effect. Unhappy nation! thus torn to pieces by intestine talks! never, I fear, will it be restored to tranquility and silence. Words are but breath, breath is but air; and air put into motion is nothing but wind. This vast empire, therefore, may be compared to nothing more or less than a mighty wind-mill, and the orators, and the chatterers, and the slang-whangers, are the breezes that put it in motion; unluckily, however, they are apt to blow different ways, and their blaats counteracting each other—the mill is perplexed, the wheels stand still, the grist is unground, and the miller and his family starved.

Everything partakes of the windy nature of the government. In case of any domestic grievance, or an insult from a foreign foe, the people are all in a buzz, town-meetings are immediately held where the quidnuncs of the city repair, each like an Atlas, with the cares of the whole nation upon his shoulders, each resolutely bent upon saving his country, and each swelling and strutting like a turkey-cock, puffed up with words, and wind, and nonsense. After bustling, and buzzing, and bawling for some time, and after each man has shown himself to be indubitably the greatest personage in the meeting, they pass a string of resolutions, i.e., words, which were previously prepared for the purpose, these resolutions are whimsically denominated the sense of the meeting, and are sent off for the instruction of the reigning bashaw, who receives them graciously, puts them into his red breeches pocket, forgets to read them—and so the matter ends.

As to his highness, the present bashaw, who is at the very top of the logocracy, never was a dignitary better qualified for his station. He is a man of superlative ventosity, and comparable to nothing but a huge bladder of wind. He talks of vanquishing all opposition by the force of reason and philosophy, throws his gauntlet at all the nations of the earth, and defies them to meet him—on the field of argument! Is the national dignity insulted, a case in which his highness of Tripoli would immediately call forth his forces, the bashaw of America—utters a speech. Does a foreign invader molest the commerce in the very mouth of the harbors, an insult which would induce

his highness of Tripoli to order out his fleets, his highness of America—utters a speech. Are the free citizens of America dragged from on board the vessels of their country, and forcibly detained in the war ships of another—his highness utters a speech Is a peaceable citizen killed by the marauders of a foreign power, on the very shores of his country—his highness utters a speech. Does an alarming insurrection break out in a distant part of the empire—his highness utters a speech!—nay, more, for here he shows his "energies"—he most intrepidly dispatches a courier on horseback and orders him to ride one hundred and twenty miles a day, with a most formidable army of proclamations, i.e., a collection of words, packed up in his saddle-bags. He is instructed to show no favor nor affection, but to charge the thickest ranks of the enemy, and to speechify and batter by words the conspiracy and the conspirators out of existence. Heavens, my friend, what a deal of blustering is here! It reminds me of a dunghill cock in a farm-yard, who, having accidentally in his scratchings found a worm, immediately begins a most vociferous cackling—calls around him his hen-hearted companions, who run chattering from all quarters to gobble up the poor little worm that happened to turn under his eye O, Asem! Asem! on what a prodigious great scale is everything in this country!

Thus, then, I conclude my observations The infidel nations have each a separate characteristic trait, by which they may be distinguished from each other the Spaniards, for instance, may be said to sleep upon every affair of importance, the Italians to fiddle upon everything; the French to dance upon everything; the Germans to smoke upon everything; the British islanders to eat upon everything; and the windy subjects of the American logocracy to talk upon everything

For ever thine,

MUSTAPHA

1807

### From A HISTORY OF NEW YORK

The appearance of *Knickerbocker's History* was preceded by a series of mystifying advertisements in a New York paper, inquiring about the whereabouts of a mythical Dutch historian Diedrich

Knickerbocker, reported as having disappeared, leaving only his manuscript, which was to be published in the hope of defraying his bill for board and lodging (See Irving's preface to "Rip Van Winkle," below)

#### BOOK III, CHAPTER I

#### [Wouter Van Twiller]

GRIEVOUS and very much to be commiserated is the task of the feeling historian, who writes the history of his native land If it fall to his lot to be the recorder of calamity or crime, the mournful page is watered with his tears; nor can he recall the most prosperous and blissful era without a melancholy sigh at the reflection that it has passed away forever! I know not whether it be owing to an immoderate love for the simplicity of former times, or to that certain tenderness of heart incident to all sentimental historians, but I candidly confess that I cannot look back on the happier days of our city, which I now describe, without great dejection of spirit With faltering hand do I withdraw the curtain of oblivion that veils the modest merit of our venerable ancestors, and as their figures rise to my mental vision, humble myself before their mighty shades.

Such are my feelings when I revisit the family mansion of the Knickerbockers and spend a lonely hour in the chamber where hang the portraits of my forefathers, shrouded in dust, like the forms they represent With pious reverence do I gaze on the countenances of those renowned burghers who have preceded me in the steady march of existence,—whose sober and temperate blood now meanders through my veins, flowing slower and slower in its feeble conduits, until its current shall soon be stopped forever!

These, I say to myself, are but frail memorials of the mighty men who flourished in the days of the patriarchs, but who, alas, have long since moldered in that tomb towards which my steps are insensibly and irresistibly hastening! As I pace the darkened chamber and lose myself in melancholy musings, the shadowy images around me almost seem to steal once more into existence—their countenances to assume the animation of life—their eyes to pursue me in every movement! Carried away

by the delusions of fancy, I almost imagine myself surrounded by the shades of the departed, and holding sweet converse with the worthies of antiquity! Ah, hapless Diedrich! born in a degenerate age, abandoned to the buffetings of fortune—a stranger and a weary pilgrim in thy native land—blest with no weeping wife, nor family of helpless children, but doomed to wander neglected through those crowded streets, and elbowed by foreign upstarts from those fair abodes where once thine ancestors held sovereign empire!

Let me not, however, lose the historian in the man, nor suffer the doing recollections of age to overcome me, while dwelling with fond garrulity on the virtuous days of the patriarchs, —on those sweet days of simplicity and ease, which never more will dawn on the lovely island of Manna-hata

These melancholy reflections have been forced from me by the growing wealth and importance of New Amsterdam, which, I plainly perceive, are to involve it in all kinds of perils and disasters. Already, as I observed at the close of my last book, they had awakened the attentions of the mother country. The usual mark of protection shown by mother countries to wealthy colonies was forthwith manifested; a governor being sent out to rule over the province, and squeeze out of it as much revenue as possible. The arrival of a governor of course put an end to the protectorate of Oloffe the Dreamer.<sup>1</sup> He appears, however, to have dreamt to some purpose during his sway, as we find him afterwards living as a patroon on a great landed estate on the banks of the Hudson, having virtually forfeited all right to his ancient appellation of Kortlandt or Lackland.

It was in the year of our Lord 1629 that Mynheer Wouter Van Twiller was appointed governor of the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, under the commission and control of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General of the United Netherlands, and the privileged West India Company.

Thus renowned old gentleman arrived at New Amsterdam in the merry month of June, the sweetest month in all the year; when Dan

Apollo seems to dance up the transparent firmament—when the robin, the thrush, and a thousand other wanton songsters, make the woods to resound with amorous ditties, and the luxurious little bobolink<sup>1</sup> revels among the clover blossoms of the meadows,—all which happy coincidence persuaded the old dames of New Amsterdam, who were skilled in the art of foretelling events, that this was to be a happy and prosperous administration.

The renowned Wouter (or Walter) Van Twiller was descended from a long line of Dutch burgomasters, who had successively dozed away their lives, and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam, and who had comforted themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety that they were never either heard or talked of—which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all magistrates and rulers. There are two opposite ways by which some men make a figure in the world: one, by talking faster than they think, and the other, by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first, many a smatterer acquires the reputation of a man of quick parts, by the other, many a dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be considered the very type of wisdom. This, by the way, is a casual remark, which I would not, for the universe, have it thought I apply to Governor Van Twiller. It is true he was a man shut up within himself, like an oyster, and rarely spoke, except in monosyllables, but then it was allowed he seldom said a foolish thing. So invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh or even to smile through the whole course of a long and prosperous life. Nay, if a joke were uttered in his presence that set light-minded hearers in a roar, it was observed to throw him into a state of perplexity. Sometimes he would deign to inquire into the matter, and when, after much explanation, the joke was made as plain as a pike-staff, he would continue to smoke his pipe in silence, and at length, knocking out the ashes, would exclaim, "Well! I see nothing in all that to laugh about."

With all his reflective habits, he never made up his mind on a subject. His adherents ac-

<sup>1</sup> In charge of the Dutch trading post at Manhattan before the appointment of a governor

<sup>1</sup> bobolink

counted for this by the astonishing magnitude of his ideas. He conceived every subject on so grand a scale that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it. Certain it is that, if any matter were propounded to him on which ordinary mortals would rashly determine at first glance, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, shake his capacious head, smoke some time in profound silence, and at length observe that "he had his doubts about the matter"; which gained him the reputation of a man slow of belief and not easily imposed upon. What is more, it gained him a lasting name, for to this habit of the mind has been attributed his surname of Twiller, which is said to be a corruption of the original Twijfeler, or, in plain English, Doubter

The person of this illustrious old gentleman was formed and proportioned as though it had been molded by the hands of some cunning Dutch statuary, as a model of majesty and lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, and of such stupendous dimensions that Dame Nature, with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck capable of supporting it, wherefore, she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his backbone, just between the shoulders. His body was oblong and particularly capacious at bottom; which was wisely ordered by Providence, seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labor of walking. His legs were short but sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain, so that when erect he had not a little the appearance of a beer-barrel on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented a vast expanse, unfurrowed by any of those lines and angles which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small gray eyes twinkled feebly in the midst like two stars of lesser magnitude in a hazy firmament, and his full-fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of everything that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a spitzenburgh apple.

His habits were as regular as his person. He

daily took his four stated meals, appropriating exactly an hour to each; he smoked and doubted eight hours, and he slept the remaining twelve of the four-and-twenty. Such was the renowned Wouter Van Twiller—a true philosopher, for his mind was either elevated above, or tranquilly settled below, the cares and perplexities of this world. He had lived in it for years, without feeling the least curiosity to know whether the sun revolved round it or it round the sun; and he had watched, for at least half a century, the smoke curling from his pipe to the ceiling, without once troubling his head with any of those numerous theories by which a philosopher would have perplexed his brain, in accounting for its rising above the surrounding atmosphere.

In his council he presided with great state and solemnity. He sat in a huge chair of solid oak, hewn in the celebrated forest of the Hague, fabricated by an experienced timberman<sup>1</sup> of Amsterdam, and curiously carved about the arms and feet, into exact imitations of gigantic eagle's claws. Instead of a scepter he swayed a long Turkish pipe, wrought with jasmine and amber, which had been presented to a stadtholder of Holland at the conclusion of a treaty with one of the petty Barbary powers. In this stately chair would he sit, and this magnificent pipe would he smoke, shaking his right knee with a constant motion, and fixing his eye for hours together upon a little print of Amsterdam which hung in a black frame against the opposite wall of the council-chamber. Nay, it has even been said, that when any deliberation of extraordinary length and intricacy was on the carpet, the renowned Wouter would shut his eyes for full two hours at a time, that he might not be disturbed by external objects, and at such times the internal commotion of his mind was evinced by certain regular guttural sounds which his admirers declared were merely the noise of conflict made by his contending doubts and opinions.

It is with infinite difficulty I have been enabled to collect these biographical anecdotes of the great man under consideration. The facts respecting him were so scattered and so vague, and divers of them so questionable in

<sup>1</sup> carpenter



point of authenticity, that I have had to give up the search after many, and decline the admission of still more, which would have tended to heighten the coloring of his portrait

I have been the more anxious to delineate fully the person and habits of Wouter Van Twiller, from the consideration that he was not only the first, but also the best governor that ever presided over this ancient and respectable province; and so tranquil and benevolent was his reign that I do not find throughout the whole of it a single instance of any offender being brought to punishment—a most indubitable sign of a merciful governor, and a case unparalleled, excepting in the reign of the illustrious King Log, from whom, it is hinted, the renowned Van Twiller was a lineal descendant

The very outset of the career of this excellent magistrate was distinguished by an example of legal acumen that gave flattering presage of a wise and equitable administration. The morning after he had been installed in office, and at the moment that he was making his breakfast from a prodigious earthen dish filled with milk and Indian pudding, he was interrupted by the appearance of Wandle Schoonhoven, a very important old burgher of New Amsterdam, who complained bitterly of one Barent Bleecker, inasmuch as he refused to come to a settlement of accounts, seeing that there was a heavy balance in favor of the said Wandle Governor Van Twiller, as I have already observed, was a man of few words; he was likewise a mortal enemy to multiplying writings—or being disturbed at his breakfast. Having listened attentively to the statement of Wandle Schoonhoven, giving an occasional grunt as he shoveled a spoonful of Indian pudding into his mouth,—either as a sign that he relished the dish or comprehended the story,—he called unto him his constable, and pulling out of his breeches-pocket a huge jackknife, dispatched it after the defendant as a summons, accompanied by his tobacco-box as a warrant.

This summary process was as effectual in those simple days as was the seal-ring of the great Haroun Alraschid<sup>1</sup> among the true believers. The two parties being confronted be-

fore him, each produced a book of accounts, written in a language and character that would have puzzled any but a High-Dutch commentator, or a learned decipherer of Egyptian obelisks. The sage Wouter took them one after the other, and having poised them in his hands, and attentively counted over the number of leaves, fell straightway into a very great doubt and smoked for half an hour without saying a word; at length, laying his finger beside his nose, and shutting his eyes for a moment, with the air of a man who has just caught a subtle idea by the tail, he slowly took his pipe from his mouth, puffed forth a column of tobacco smoke, and with marvelous gravity and solemnity pronounced that, having carefully counted over the leaves and weighed the books, it was found that one was just as thick and as heavy as the other, therefore, it was the final opinion of the court that the accounts were equally balanced therefore, Wandle should give Barent a receipt, and Barent should give Wandle a receipt, and the constable should pay the costs.

This decision, being straightway made known, diffused general joy throughout New Amsterdam, for the people immediately perceived that they had a very wise and equitable magistrate to rule over them. But its happiest effect was that not another lawsuit took place throughout the whole of his administration, and the office of constable fell into such decay that there was not one of those losel scouts<sup>1</sup> known in the province for many years. I am the more particular in dwelling on this transaction, not only because I deem it one of the most sage and righteous judgments on record, and well worthy the attention of modern magistrates, but because it was a miraculous event in the history of the renowned Wouter—being the only time he was ever known to come to a decision in the whole course of his life

1809

## BOOK VI, CHAPTER VIII

[*The Capture of Fort Christina*]

The bloodless capture of the Swedish trading post at Fort Christina, on the Delaware, in 1655, by a Dutch force under Governor Peter Stuyvesant is

<sup>1</sup> Caliph of Bagdad, celebrated in the *Arabian Nights*

<sup>1</sup> worthless rogues

turned by Irving into a comic burlesque parodying the heroic style of the Greek and Roman epics. The fort was garrisoned by a small number of Swedes and Finns under Governor Jan Rusingh.

The text is that of the original 1809 edition, modernized as to spelling and punctuation.

THE men of the Manhattoes plucked up new courage when they heard their leader—or rather they dreaded his fierce displeasure, of which they stood in more awe than of all the Swedes in Christendom—but the daring Peter, not waiting for their aid, plunged sword in hand into the thickest of the foe. Then did he display some such incredible achievements as have never been known since the miraculous days of the giants. Wherever he went the enemy shrank before him—with fierce impetuosity he pushed forward, driving the Swedes, like dogs, into their own ditch—but as he fearlessly advanced, the foe, like rushing waves which close upon the scudding bark, thronged in his rear and hung upon his flank with fearful peril. One desperate Swede, who had a mighty heart almost as large as a peppercorn, drove his dastard sword full at the hero's heart. But the protecting power that watches over the safety of all great and good men turned aside the hostile blade, and directed it to a large side pocket, where reposed an enormous iron tobacco box, endowed like the shield of Achilles with supernatural powers—no doubt in consequence of its being piously decorated with a portrait of the blessed St. Nicholas. Thus was the dreadful blow repelled, but not without occasioning to the great Peter a fearful loss of wind.

Like as a furious bear, when gored by worrying curs, turns fiercely round, shows his dread teeth, and springs upon the foe, so did our hero turn upon the treacherous Swede. The miserable varlet sought in flight for safety—but the active Peter, seizing him by an immeasurable queue that dangled from his head—"Ah, whoreson caterpillar!" roared he, "here is what shall make dog's meat of thee!" So saying, he whirled his trusty sword and made a blow that would have decapitated him had he, like Briareus, half a hundred heads, but that the prying steel struck short and shaved the queue forever from his crown. At this very moment a cunning arquebuser,

perched on the summit of a neighboring mound, levelled his deadly instrument and would have sent the gallant Stuyvesant, a wailing ghost to haunt the Stygian shore—had not the watchful Minerva, who had just stopped to tie up her garter, saw [sic] the great peril of her favorite chief, and dispatched old Boreas with his bellows; who in the very nick of time, just as the direful match descended to the pan, gave such a lucky blast as blew all the priming from the touchhole!

Thus waged the horrid fight—when the stout Rusingh, surveying the battle from the top of a little ravelin, perceived his faithful troops banded, beaten, and kicked by the invincible Peter. Language cannot describe the choler with which he was seized at the sight—he only stopped for a moment to disburden himself of five thousand anathemas, and then drawing his immeasurable cheese toaster, straddled down to the field of combat, with some such thundering strides as Jupiter is said by old Hesiod to have taken when he strode down the spheres, to play off his sky rockets at the Titans.

No sooner did these two rival heroes come face to face, than they each made a prodigious start of fifty feet, (Flemish measure) such as is made by your most experienced stage champions. Then did they regard each other for a moment with bitter aspect, like two furious ram cats, on the very point of a clapper-clawing. Then did they throw themselves in one attitude, then in another, striking their swords on the ground, first on the right side, then on the left, at last at it they went, like five hundred houses, on fire! Words cannot tell the prodigies of strength and valor displayed in this direful encounter—an encounter compared to which the far famed battles of Ajax with Hector, of Enneas with Turnus, Orlando with Rodomont, Guy of Warwick with Colbrand the Dane, or of that renowned Welsh Knight Sir Owen of the mountains with the giant Gwylon, were all gentle sports and holiday recreations. At length the valiant Peter, watching his opportunity, aimed a fearful blow with the full intention of cleaving his adversary to the very chine; but Rusingh, numbly raising his sword, warded it off so narrowly, that glancing on one

side, it shaved away a huge canteen full of fourth proof brandy that he always carried swung on one side, thence pursuing its trenchant course, it severed off a deep coat pocket, stored with bread and cheese—all which dainties, rolling among the armies, occasioned a fearful scrambling between the Swedes and Dutchmen, and made the general battle to wax ten times more furious than ever.

Enraged to see his military stores thus wofully laid waste, the stout Rusingh, collecting all his forces, aimed a mighty blow full at the hero's crest. In vain did his fierce little cocked hat oppose its course; the biting steel clove through the stubborn ram beaver, and would infallibly have cracked his gallant crown, but that the skull was of such adamantine hardness that the brittle weapon shattered into five and twenty pieces, shedding a thousand sparks, like beams of glory, round his grizzly visage.

Stunned with the blow, the valiant Peter reeled, turned up his eyes and beheld fifty thousand suns, besides moons and stars, dancing Scotch reels about the firmament—at length, missing his footing, by reason of his wooden leg, down he came on his seat of honor, with a crash that shook the surrounding hills, and would infallibly have wracked his anatomical system, had he not been received into a cushion softer than velvet, which Providence, or Minerva, or St. Nicholas, or some kindly cow, had benevolently prepared for his reception.

The furious Rusingh, in despite of that noble maxim, cherished by all true knights, that "fair play is a jewel," hastened to take advantage of the hero's fall, but just as he was stooping to give the fatal blow, the ever vigilant Peter bestowed him a sturdy thwack over the sconce with his wooden leg, that set some dozen chimes of bells ringing triple bobmajors in his cerebellum. The bewildered Swede staggered with the blow, and in the mean time the wary Peter, espying a pocket pistol lying hard by (which had dropped from the wallet of his faithful squire and trumpeter Van Corlear during his furious encounter with the drummer) discharged it full at the head of the reeling Rusingh—Let not my reader mistake—it was not a murderous

weapon loaded with powder and ball, but a little sturdy stone pottle, charged to the muzzle with a double dram of true Dutch courage, which the knowing Van Corlear always carried about him by way of replenishing his valor. The hideous missile sung through the air, and true to its course, as was the mighty fragment of a rock discharged at Hector by bully Ajax, encountered the huge head of the gigantic Swede with matchless violence.

This heaven-directed blow decided the eventful battle. The ponderous pericranium of General Jan Rusingh sunk upon his breast, his knees tottered under him, a deathlike torpor seized upon his Titan frame, and he tumbled to the earth with such tremendous violence that old Pluto started with affright, lest he should have broken through the roof of his infernal palace.

His fall, like that of Goliath, was the signal for defeat and victory—The Swedes gave way—the Dutch pressed forward, the former took to their heels, the latter hotly pursued—Some entered with them, pell mell, through the sally port—others stormed the bastion, and others scrambled over the curtain. Thus in a little while the impregnable fortress of Fort Christina, which like another Troy had stood a siege of full ten hours, was finally carried by assault, without the loss of a single man on either side. Victory, in the likeness of a gigantic ox fly, sat perched upon the little cocked hat of the gallant Stuyvesant, and it was universally declared by all the writers whom he hired to write the history of his expedition, that on this memorable day he gained a sufficient quantity of glory to immortalize a dozen of the greatest heroes in Christendom!

1809

## RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH  
KNICKERBOCKER

By Woden, God of Saxons,  
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,  
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep  
Unto thylke day in which I creep into  
My sepulchre—

CARTWRIGHT

[The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men, for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics, whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a book-worm.]

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established, and it is now admitted into all historical collections as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. If, however, was apt to ride his bobby his own way, and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection, yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folks whose good opinion is well worth having, particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes, and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal or a Queen Anne's Farthing.]

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will

gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant, (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten) there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man, he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient, henpecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity, for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects be considered a tolerable blessing, and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part

in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity, and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance, for he would sit on a wet rock with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance and fish all day without a murmur even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor, even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences, the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own, but as to doing any family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country, everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else, the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had outdoor work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a

mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst-conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment, but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the run he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife, so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master, for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broom-

stick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; and a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place wher, by chance, an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveler. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper, learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary, and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junta were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree, so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however, (for every great man has his adherents) perfectly understood him and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs, but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught, nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it, but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and reechoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long be-

fore he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air; "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him, he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be someone of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist, several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow like a small amphitheater, sur-

rounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marveled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheater, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the center was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance, he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-luster

countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rup's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes. It was a bright, sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rup, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep—the strange man with a keg of liquor, the mountain ravine, the wild retreat among the rocks, the woe-begone party at ninepins, the flagon "Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rup, "What excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrustured with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roisterers of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain, the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the

joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rup, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen. He found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening, but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheater, but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rup was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog, he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? The morning was passing away and Rup felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun, he dreaded to meet his wife, but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with everyone in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this



gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered, it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him, he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains. There ran the silver Hudson at a distance. There was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been. Rip was sorely perplexed. "That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears. He called loudly for his wife and children. The lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn. But it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted,

"The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle."<sup>1</sup> Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes. All this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe, but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a scepter, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, *General Washington*.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke instead of idle speeches, or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand bills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens, elections, members of Congress, liberty, Bunker's Hill, heroes of seventy-six, and other words which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern-politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired on which side he voted? Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, whether he was Federal or Democrat? Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend

<sup>1</sup> an allusion, apparently, to the intrusion of New Englanders, whom Irving did not like as a class, into New York.

the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?

"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders. "A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well, who are they? Name them."

Rip berought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war, some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point. Others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know. He never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars, too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating such

enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war, Congress, Stony Point, he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain, apparently as lazy and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end, "I'm not myself. I'm somebody else. That's me yonder. No, that's somebody else got into my shoes. I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool, the old man won't hurt you."

The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardener."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since. His dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice, "Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he. "Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle. It is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor. Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it, some were seen to wink at each other and put their tongues in their cheeks, and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years with his crew of the *Half Moon*, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise and keep a guardian

eye upon the river and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug well-furnished house, and a stout, cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm, but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits, he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time, and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war, that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England, and that, instead of being a subject of His Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician, the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him, but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was petticoat government. Happily that was at an end, he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes;

which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was doubtless owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins, and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

1819

### ENGLISH WRITERS ON AMERICA

The "literary War of 1812," as it has been called, extended over a longer period than did the military hostilities between the United States and Great Britain. Its chief documents on the American side were Dr. Dwight's essay "On the [British] Review of *Inchiquin's Letters*" (1815), Robert Walsh's *An Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain*, and the satirical parodies and arguments of Irving's friend, James Kirke Paulding. *The Diverging History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan*, *The Lay of the Scotch Fiddle* (both in 1813), and *The United States and England* (1815). The British contributions may be studied in W. B. Cairns, *British Criticisms of American Writings, 1783-1815* (1918) and *British Criticisms of American Writings, 1815-1833* (1922). Irving's essay in *The Sketch Book*, addressed to Americans but designed for English readers as well, sets forth the causes of international ill-will and gives sound advice to both.

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invisible locks methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her

mighty youth, and kindling her endassled eyes at the full mid-day beam."—MILTON ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS<sup>1</sup>

It is with feelings of deep regret that I observe the literary animosity daily growing up between England and America. Great curiosity has been awakened of late with respect to the United States, and the London press has teemed with volumes of travels through the Republic, but they seem intended to diffuse error rather than knowledge; and so successful have they been, that, notwithstanding the constant intercourse between the nations, there is no people concerning whom the great mass of the British public have less pure information, or entertain more numerous prejudices.

English travellers are the best and the worst in the world. Where no motives of pride or interest intervene, none can equal them for profound and philosophical views of society, or faithful and graphical descriptions of external objects, but when either the interest or reputation of their own country comes in collision with that of another, they go to the opposite extreme, and forget their usual probity and candor in the indulgence of splenetic remark and an illiberal spirit of ridicule.

Hence, their travels are more honest and accurate, the more remote the country described. I would place implicit confidence in an Englishman's descriptions of the regions beyond the cataracts of the Nile, of unknown islands in the Yellow Sea, of the interior of India, or of any other tract which other travellers might be apt to picture out with the illusions of their fancies; but I would cautiously receive his account of his immediate neighbors and of those nations with which he is in habits of most frequent intercourse. However I might be disposed to trust his probity, I dare not trust his prejudices.

It has also been the peculiar lot of our country to be visited by the worst kind of English travellers. While men of philosophical spirit and cultivated minds have been sent from England to ransack the poles, to penetrate the deserts, and to study the manners and customs of barbarous nations, with which she can have no permanent intercourse of profit or pleasure;

<sup>1</sup> from Milton's *Areopagitica*, published in 1644.

it has been left to the broken-down tradesman, the scheming adventurer, the wandering mechanic, the Manchester and Birmingham agent, to be her oracles respecting America. From such sources she is content to receive her information respecting a country in a singular state of moral and physical development; a country in which one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world is now performing, and which presents the most profound and momentous studies to the statesman and philosopher.

That such men should give prejudiced accounts of America is not a matter of surprise. The themes it offers for contemplation are too vast and elevated for their capacities. The national character is yet in a state of fermentation it may have its frothiness and sediment, but its ingredients are sound and wholesome: it has already given proofs of powerful and generous qualities, and the whole promises to settle down into something substantially excellent. But the causes which are operating to strengthen and ennoble it, and its daily indications of admirable properties, are all lost upon these purblind observers, who are only afflicted by the little asperities incident to its present situation. They are capable of judging only of the surface of things, of those matters which come in contact with their private interests and personal gratifications. They miss some of the snug conveniences and petty comforts which belong to an old, highly finished, and overpopulous state of society, where the ranks of useful labor are crowded, and many earn a painful and servile subsistence by studying the very caprices of appetite and self-indulgence. These minor comforts, however, are all-important in the estimation of narrow minds, which either do not perceive, or will not acknowledge, that they are more than counterbalanced among us by great and generally diffused blessings.

They may, perhaps, have been disappointed in some unreasonable expectation of sudden gain. They may have pictured America to themselves an *El Dorado*, where gold and silver abounded, and the natives were lacking in sagacity; and where they were to become strangely and suddenly rich, in some unforeseen but easy manner. The same weakness of

mind that indulges absurd expectations produces petulance in disappointment. Such persons become embittered against the country on finding that there, as everywhere else, a man must sow before he can reap; must win wealth by industry and talent, and must contend with the common difficulties of nature and the shrewdness of an intelligent and enterprising people.

Perhaps, through mistaken, or ill-directed hospitality, or from the prompt disposition to cheer and countenance the stranger, prevalent among my countrymen, they may have been treated with unwonted respect in America, and having been accustomed all their lives to consider themselves below the surface of good society, and brought up in a servile feeling of inferiority, they become arrogant on the common boon of civility they attribute to the lowliness of others their own elevation, and underrate a society where there are no artificial distinctions, and where, by any chance, such individuals as themselves can rise to consequence.

One would suppose, however, that information coming from such sources, on a subject where the truth is so desirable, would be received with caution by the censors of the press, that the motives of these men, their veracity, their opportunities of inquiry and observation, and their capacities for judging correctly, would be rigorously scrutinized before their evidence was admitted, in such sweeping extent, against a kindred nation. The very reverse, however, is the case, and it furnishes a striking instance of human inconsistency. Nothing can surpass the vigilance with which English critics will examine the credibility of the traveller who publishes an account of some distant, and comparatively unimportant country. How warily will they compare the measurements of a pyramid or the descriptions of a ruin; and how sternly will they censure any inaccuracy in these contributions of merely curious knowledge while they will receive, with eagerness and unhesitating faith, the gross misrepresentations of coarse and obscure writers concerning a country with which their own is placed in the most important and delicate relations. Nay, they will even make these apocryphal volumes textbooks,

on which to enlarge with a zeal and an ability worthy of a more generous cause

I shall not, however, dwell on this irksome and hackneyed topic, nor should I have adverted to it, but for the undue interest apparently taken in it by my countrymen, and certain injurious effects which I apprehend it might produce upon the national feeling. We attach too much consequence to these attacks. They cannot do us any essential injury. The tissue of misrepresentations attempted to be woven round us are like cobwebs woven round the limbs of an infant giant. Our country continually outgrows them. One falsehood after another falls off of itself. We have but to live on, and every day we live a whole volume of refutation. All the writers of England united, if we could for a moment suppose their great minds stooping to so unworthy a combination, could not conceal our rapidly growing importance and matchless prosperity. They could not conceal that these are owing, not merely to physical and local, but also to moral causes—to the political liberty, the general diffusion of knowledge, the prevalence of sound, moral, and religious principles which give force and sustained energy to the character of a people, and which, in fact, have been the acknowledged and wonderful supporters of their own national power, and glory.

But why are we so exquisitely alive to the aspersions of England? Why do we suffer ourselves to be so affected by the contumely she has endeavored to cast upon us? It is not in the opinion of England alone that honor lives, and reputation has its being. The world at large is the arbiter of a nation's fame, with its thousand eyes it witnesses a nation's deeds, and from their collective testimony is national glory or national disgrace established.

For ourselves, therefore, it is comparatively of but little importance whether England does us justice or not; it is, perhaps, of far more importance to herself. She is instilling anger and resentment into the bosom of a youthful nation, to grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. If in America, as some of her writers are laboring to convince her, she is hereafter to find an invidious rival and a gigantic foe, she may thank those very writers for having provoked rivalry and

irritated hostility. Everyone knows the all-pervading influence of literature at the present day, and how much the opinions and passions of mankind are under its control. The mere contests of the sword are temporary; their wounds are but in the flesh, and it is the pride of the generous to forgive and forget them, but the slanders of the pen pierce to the heart; they rankle longest in the noblest spirits; they dwell ever present in the mind, and render it morbidly sensitive to the most trifling collision. It is but seldom that any one overt act produces hostilities between two nations, there exists, most commonly, a previous jealousy and ill-will, a predisposition to take offense. Trace these to their cause, and how often will they be found to originate in the mischievous effusions of mercenary writers, who, secure in their closets, and for ignominious bread, concoct and circulate the venom that is to inflame the generous and the brave.

I am not laying too much stress upon this point, for it applies most emphatically to our particular case. Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America, for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader. There is nothing published in England on the subject of our country, that does not circulate through every part of it. There is not a calumny dropped from an English pen, nor an unworthy sarcasm uttered by an English statesman, that does not go to blight good will and add to the mass of latent resentment. Possessing, then, as England does, the fountain-head from whence the literature of the language flows, how completely is it in her power, and how truly is it her duty, to make it the medium of amiable and magnanimous feeling—a stream where two nations meet together and drink in peace and kindness. Should she, however, persist in turning it to waters of bitterness, the time may come when she may repent her folly. The present friendship of America may be of but little moment to her, but the future destinies of that country do not admit of a doubt; over those of England, there lower some shadows of uncertainty. Should, then, a day of gloom arrive—should these reverses overtake her from which the proudest empires have not

been exempt—she may look back with regret at her infatuation in repulsing from her side a nation she might have grappled to her bosom, and thus destroying her only chance for real friendship beyond the boundaries of her own dominions.

There is a general impression in England that the people of the United States are inimical to the parent country. It is one of the errors which have been diligently propagated by designing writers. There is, doubtless, considerable political hostility, and a general soreness at the illiberality of the English press, but, collectively speaking, the prepossessions of the people are strongly in favor of England. Indeed, at one time they amounted, in many parts of the Union, to an absurd degree of bigotry. The bare name of Englishman was a passport to the confidence and hospitality of every family, and too often gave a transient currency to the worthless and the ungrateful. Throughout the country there was something of enthusiasm connected with the idea of England. We looked to it with a hallowed feeling of tenderness and veneration, as the land of our forefathers—the august repository of the monuments and antiquities of our race—the birthplace and mausoleum of the sages and heroes of our paternal history. After our own country, there was none in whose glory we more delighted—none whose good opinion we were more anxious to possess—none towards which our hearts yearned with such throbbings of warm consanguinity. Even during the late war, whenever there was the least opportunity for kind feelings to spring forth, it was the delight of the generous spirits of our country to show that, in the midst of hostilities, they still kept alive the sparks of future friendship.

Is all this to be at an end? Is this golden band of kindred sympathies, so rare between nations, to be broken for ever?—Perhaps it is for the best—it may dispel an illusion which might have kept us in mental vassalage, which might have interfered occasionally with our true interests, and prevented the growth of proper national pride. But it is hard to give up the kindred tie and there are feelings dearer than interest—closer to the heart than pride—that will still make us cast back a look of regret, as

we wander farther and farther from the paternal roof, and lament the waywardness of the parent that would repel the affections of the child.

Shortsighted and injudicious, however, as the conduct of England may be in this system of aspersion, recrimination on our part would be equally ill-judged. I speak not of a prompt and spirited vindication of our country nor the keenest castigation of her slanderers—but I allude to a disposition to retaliate in kind, to retort sarcasm and inspire prejudice, which seems to be growing widely among our writers. Let us guard particularly against such a temper, for it will redouble the evil instead of redressing the wrong. Nothing is so easy and inviting as the retort of abuse and sarcasm, but it is a paltry and unprofitable contest. It is the alternative of a morbid mind, fretted into petulance rather than warmed into indignation. If England is willing to permit the mean jealousies of trade or the rancorous animosities of politics to deprave the integrity of her press and poison the fountain of public opinion, let us beware of her example. She may deem it her interest to diffuse error and engender antipathy, for the purpose of checking emigration, we have no purpose of the kind to serve. Neither have we any spirit of national jealousy to gratify, for as yet, in all our rivalships with England, we are the rising and the gaining party. There can be no end to answer, therefore, but the gratification of resentment—a mere spirit of retaliation, and even that is impotent. Our retorts are never republished in England, they fall short, therefore, of their aim, but they foster a querulous and peevish temper among our writers, they sour the sweet flow of our early literature and sow thorns and brambles among its blossoms. What is still worse, they circulate through our own country, and, as far as they have effect, excite virulent national prejudices. This last is the evil most especially to be deprecated. Governed, as we are, entirely by public opinion, the utmost care should be taken to preserve the purity of the public mind. Knowledge is power, and truth is knowledge, whoever, therefore, knowingly propagates a prejudice willfully saps the foundation of his country's strength.

The members of a republic, above all other men, should be candid and dispassionate. They are, individually, portions of the sovereign mind and sovereign will, and should be enabled to come to all questions of national concern with calm and unbiased judgments. From the peculiar nature of our relations with England, we must have more frequent questions of a difficult and delicate character with her than with any other nation—questions that affect the most acute and excitable feelings, and as, in the adjusting of these, our national measures must ultimately be determined by popular sentiment, we cannot be too anxiously attentive to purify it from all latent passion or prepossession

Opening, too, as we do, an asylum for strangers from every portion of the earth, we should receive all with impartiality. It should be our pride to exhibit an example of one nation, at least, destitute of national antipathies and exercising not merely the overt acts of hospitality, but those more rare and noble courtesies which spring from liberality of opinion

What have we to do with national prejudices? They are the inveterate diseases of old countries, contracted in rude and ignorant ages, when nations knew but little of each other, and looked beyond their own boundaries with distrust and hostility. We, on the contrary, have sprung into national existence in an enlightened and philosophic age, when the different parts of the habitable world and the various branches of the human family have been indefatigably studied and made known to each other, and we forego the advantages of our birth if we do not shake off the national prejudices, as we would the local superstitions, of the old world

But above all let us not be influenced by any angry feelings so far as to shut our eyes to the perception of what is really excellent and amiable in the English character. We are a young people, necessarily an imitative one, and must take our examples and models, in a great degree, from the existing nations of Europe. There is no country more worthy of our study than England. The spirit of her constitution is most analogous to ours. The manners of her people—their intellectual

activity—their freedom of opinion—their habits of thinking on those subjects which concern the dearest interests and most sacred charities of private life, are all congenial to the American character, and, in fact, are all intrinsically excellent, for it is in the moral feeling of the people that the deep foundations of British prosperity are laid, and however the superstructure may be timeworn or overrun by abuses, there must be something solid in the basis, admirable in the materials, and stable in the structure of an edifice that so long has towered unshaken amidst the tempests of the world.

Let it be the pride of our writers, therefore, discarding all feelings of irritation, and disdaining to retaliate the illiberality of British authors, to speak of the English nation without prejudice and with determined candor. While they rebuke the indiscriminating bigotry with which some of our countrymen admire and imitate everything English, merely because it is English, let them frankly point out what is really worthy of approbation. We may thus place England before us as a perpetual volume of reference, wherein are recorded sound deductions from ages of experience, and while we avoid the errors and absurdities which may have crept into the page, we may draw thence golden maxims of practical wisdom, wherewith to strengthen and to embellish our national character

1820

## THE STOUT GENTLEMAN

### A STAGECOACH ROMANCE

In contrast with the longer and more diffuse tales "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," this narrative comes much closer, in its concentration, brevity, and fixed purpose, to the laws of short-story technique as later laid down by Poe

I'll cross it though it blast me!—HAMLET

It was a rainy Sunday in the gloomy month of November I had been detained, in the course of a journey, by a slight indisposition, from which I was recovering, but was still feverish, and obliged to keep within doors all day in an inn of the small town of Derby



A wet Sunday in a country inn!—whoever has had the luck to experience one can alone judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements, the bells tolled for church with a melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye; but it seemed as if I had been placed completely out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bedroom looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travelers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water, surrounding an island of muck, there were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart among which was a miserable, crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit, his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back, near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapor rising from her reeking hide, a walleyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves, an unhappy cur, chained to a doghouse hard by, uttered something every now and then, between a bark and a yelp, a drab of a kitchen wench tramped backwards and forwards through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself, everything, in short, was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hardened ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor.

I was lonely and listless, and wanted amusement. My room soon became insupportable. I abandoned it and sought what is technically called the travelers'-room. This is a public room set apart at most inns for the accommodation of a class of wayfarers called travelers, or riders; a kind of commercial knights-errant, who are incessantly scouring the kingdom in gigs, on horseback, or by coach. They are the only successors, that I know of at the present day, to the knights-errant of yore.

They lead the same kind of roving adventurous life, only changing the lance for a driving-whip, the buckler for a pattern-card, and the coat of mail for an upper Benjamin. Instead of vindicating the charms of peerless beauty, they rove about, spreading the fame and standing of some substantial tradesman, or manufacturer, and are ready at any time to bargain in his name, it being the fashion nowadays to trade, instead of fight, with one another. As the room of the hostel, in the good old fighting times, would be hung round at night with the armor of wayworn warriors, such as coats of mail, falchions, and yawning helmets, so the travelers'-room is garnished with the harnessing of their successors, with box-coats, whips of all kinds, spurs, gaiters, and oilcloth covered hats.

I was in hopes of finding some of these worthies to talk with, but was disappointed. There were, indeed, two or three in the room, but I could make nothing of them. One was just finishing his breakfast, quarreling with his bread and butter, and huffing the waiter, another buttoned on a pair of gaiters, with many execrations at Boots for not having cleaned his shoes well; a third sat drumming on the table with his fingers and looking at the rain as it streamed down the window-glass, they all appeared infected by the weather and disappeared, one after the other, without exchanging a word.

I sauntered to the window, and stood gazing at the people, picking their way to church, with petticoats hoisted midleg high, and dripping umbrellas. The bell ceased to toll, and the streets became silent. I then amused myself with watching the daughters of a tradesman opposite, who, being confined to the house for fear of wetting their Sunday finery, played off their charms at the front windows to fascinate the chance tenants of the inn. They at length were summoned away by a vigilant vinegar-faced mother, and I had nothing further from without to amuse me.

What was I to do to pass away the long-lived day? I was sadly nervous and lonely, and everything about an inn seems calculated to make a dull day ten times duller. Old newspapers, smelling of beer and tobacco smoke, and which I had already read half a dozen

times. Good for nothing books that were worse than rainy weather. I bored myself to death with an old volume of the *Lady's Magazine*. I read all the commonplace names of ambitious travelers scrawled on the panes of glass; the eternal families of the Smiths, and the Browns, and the Jacksons, and the Johnsons, and all the other sons, and I deciphered several scraps of fatiguing inn-window poetry which I have met with in all parts of the world.

The day continued lowering and gloomy, the slovenly, ragged, spongy clouds drifted heavily along; there was no variety even in the rain—it was one dull, continued, monotonous patter—patter—patter, excepting that now and then I was enlivened by the idea of a brisk shower, from the rattling of the drops upon a passing umbrella.

It was quite *refreshing* (if I may be allowed a hackneyed phrase of the day) when, in the course of the morning, a horn blew, and a stagecoach whirled through the street, with outside passengers stuck all over it, cowering under cotton umbrellas, and seethed together, and reeking with the steams of wet box-coats and upper Benjamins.

The sound brought out from their lurking-places a crew of vagabond boys, and vagabond dogs, and the carry-headed hostler, and that nondescript animal cycleped Boots, and all the other vagabond race that infest the purlieus of an inn, but the busle was transient, the coach again whirled on its way, and boy and dog, and hostler and Boots, all slunk back again to their holes, the street again became silent, and the rain continued to ram on. In fact, there was no hope of its clearing up, the barometer pointed to rainy weather, mine hostess' tortoise-shell cat sat by the fire washing her face, and rubbing her paws over her ears; and, on referring to the Almanac, I found a direful prediction stretching from the top of the page to the bottom through the whole month, "expect—much—rain—about—thus—time!"

I was dreadfully hipped. The hours seemed as if they would never creep by. The very ticking of the clock became irksome. At length the stillness of the house was interrupted by the ringing of a bell. Shortly after I heard the voice of a waiter at the bar: "The

stout gentleman in No. 13 wants his breakfast. Tea and bread and butter with ham and eggs, the eggs not to be too much done."

In such a situation as mine every incident is of importance. Here was a subject of speculation presented to my mind and ample exercise for my imagination. I am prone to paint pictures to myself, and on this occasion I had some materials to work upon. Had the guest up stairs been mentioned as Mr. Smith, or Mr. Brown, or Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Johnson, or merely as "the gentleman in No. 13," it would have been a perfect blank to me. I should have thought nothing of it, but "The stout gentleman!"—the very name had something in it of the picturesque. It at once gave the size, it embodied the personage to my mind's eye, and my fancy did the rest.

He was stout, or, as some term it, lusty; in all probability, therefore, he was advanced in life, some people expanding as they grow old. By his breakfasting rather late, and in his own room, he must be a man accustomed to live at his ease, and above the necessity of early rising, no doubt a round, rosy, lusty old gentleman.

There was another violent ringing. The stout gentleman was impatient for his breakfast. He was evidently a man of importance, "well to do in the world," accustomed to be promptly waited upon, of a keen appetite, and a little cross when hungry, "perhaps," thought I, "he may be some London Alderman, or who knows but he may be a Member of Parliament?" The breakfast was sent up, and there was a short interval of silence; he was, doubtless, making the tea. Presently there was a violent ringing, and before it could be answered, another ringing still more violent. "Bless me! what a choleric old gentleman!" The waiter came down in a huff. The butter was rancid, the eggs were overdone, the ham was too salt—the stout gentleman was evidently nice in his canning—one of those who eat and growl, and keep the waiter on the trot, and live in a state militant with the household.

The hostess got into a fume. I should observe that she was a brisk, coquettish woman; a little of a shrew, and something of a slammerkin, but very pretty withal, with a

incompoop of a husband, as shrews are apt to have. She rated the servants roundly for their negligence in sending up so bad a breakfast, but said not a word against the stout gentleman, by which I clearly perceived that he must be a man of consequence, entitled to make a noise and to give trouble at a country inn. Other eggs, and ham, and bread and butter were sent up. They appeared to be more graciously received, at least there was no further complaint.

I had not made many turns about the travelers'-room when there was another ringing. Shortly afterwards there was a stir and an inquest about the house. The stout gentleman wanted the *Times* or the *Chronicle* newspaper. I set him down, therefore, for a whig, or rather, from his being so absolute and lordly where he had a chance, I suspected him of being a radical. Hunt, I had heard, was a large man, "who knows," thought I, "but it is Hunt himself!"<sup>1</sup>

My curiosity began to be awakened. I inquired of the waiter who was this stout gentleman that was making all this stir, but I could get no information: nobody seemed to know his name. The landlords of bustling inns seldom trouble their heads about the names or occupations of their transient guests. The color of a coat, the shape or size of the person, is enough to suggest a traveling name. It is either the tall gentleman, or the short gentleman, or the gentleman in black, or the gentleman in snuff-color, or, as in the present instance, the stout gentleman. A designation of the kind once hit on answers every purpose, and saves all further inquiry.

Rain—rain—rain! pitiless, ceaseless rain! No such thing as putting a foot out of doors and no occupation nor amusement within. By and by I heard some one walking over head. It was in the stout gentleman's room. He evidently was a large man by the heaviness of his tread, and an old man from his wearing such creaking soles. "He is doubtless," thought I, "some rich old square-toes of regular habits and is now taking exercise after breakfast."

I now read all the advertisements of coaches

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt, English journalist, essayist, friend of Charles Lamb, regarded as a radical by his conservative contemporaries.

and hotels that were stuck about the mantel-piece. The *Lady's Magazine* had become an abomination to me, it was as tedious as the day itself. I wandered out, not knowing what to do, and ascended again to my room. I had not been there long, when there was a squall from a neighboring bedroom. A door opened and slammed violently, a chambermaid, that I had remarked for having a ruddy, good-humored face, went down stairs in a violent flurry. The stout gentleman had been rude to her!

This sent a whole host of my deductions to the deuce in a moment. This unknown personage could not be an old gentleman, for old gentlemen are not apt to be so obstreperous to chambermaids. He could not be a young gentleman, for young gentlemen are not apt to inspire such indignation. He must be a middle-aged man and confounded ugly into the bargain, or the girl would not have taken the matter in such terrible dudgeon. I confess I was sorely puzzled.

In a few minutes I heard the voice of my landlady. I caught a glance of her as she came tramping up stairs, her face glowing, her cap flaring, her tongue wagging the whole way. "She'd have no such doings in her house, she'd warrant. If gentlemen did spend money freely, it was no rule. She'd have no servant-maids of hers treated in that way, when they were about their work, that's what she wouldn't."

As I hate squabbles, particularly with women, and above all with pretty women, I slunk back into my room and partly closed the door, but my curiosity was too much excited not to listen. The landlady marched intrepidly to the enemy's citadel and entered it with a storm. The door closed after her. I heard her voice in high windy clamor for a moment or two. Then it gradually subsided like a gust of wind in a garret, then there was a laugh, then I heard nothing more.

After a little while my landlady came out with an odd smile on her face, adjusting her cap, which was a little on one side. As she went down stairs I heard the landlord ask her what was the matter, she said, "Nothing at all, only the girl's a fool!"—"I was more than ever perplexed what to make of this unaccountable personage, who could put a good-natured

chambermaid in a passion, and send away a termagant landlady in smiles. He could not be so old, nor cross, nor ugly either.

I had to go to work at his picture again, and to paint him entirely different. I now set him down for one of those stout gentlemen that are frequently met with swaggering about the doors of country inns. Moist, merry fellows, in Belcher handkerchiefs, whose bulk is a little assisted by malt-liquors. Men who have seen 10 the world, and been sworn at Highgate, who are used to tavern life, up to all the tricks of tapsters, and knowing in the ways of sinful publicans. Free-livers on a small scale, who are prodigal within the compass of a guinea, who call all the waters by name, touse the maids, gossip with the landlady at the bar, and prose over a pint of port or a glass of negus after dinner.

The morning wore away in forming these 20 and similar surmises. As fast as I wove one system of belief, some movement of the unknown would completely overturn it, and throw all my thoughts again into confusion. Such are the solitary operations of a feverish mind. I was, as I have said, extremely nervous, and the continual meditation on the concerns of this invisible personage began to have its effect—I was getting a fit of the fidgets.

Dinner-time came. I hoped the stout gentleman might dine in the travelers'-room and that I might at length get a view of his person, but no—he had dinner served in his own room. What could be the meaning of this solitude and mystery? He could not be a radical, there was something too aristocratical in thus keeping himself apart from the rest of the world and condemning himself to his own dull company throughout a rainy day. And then, too, he lived too well for a discontented 40 politician. He seemed to expatiate on a variety of dishes, and to sit over his wine like a jolly friend of good living. Indeed, my doubts on this head were soon at an end, for he could not have finished his first bottle before I could faintly hear him humming a tune, and on listening, I found it to be "God save the King." 'Twas plain, then, he was no radical, but a faithful subject; one who grew loyal over his bottle, and was ready to stand by king and 50 constitution, when he could stand by nothing

else. But who could he be! My conjectures began to run wild. Was he not some personage of distinction traveling incog? "God knows!" said I, at my wit's end; "it may be one of the royal family for aught I know, for they are all stout gentlemen!"

The weather continued rainy. The mysterious unknown kept his room, and, as far as I could judge, his chair, for I did not hear him 10 move. In the meantime, as the day advanced, the travelers'-room began to be frequented. Some, who had just arrived, came in buttoned up in box-coats, others came home who had been dispersed about the town. Some took their dinners, and some their tea. Had I been in a different mood, I should have found entertainment in studying this peculiar class of men. There were two especially, who were regular wags of the road, and up to all the standing jokes of travelers. They had a thousand sly things to say to the waiting-maid, whom they called Louisa, and Ethelinda, and a dozen other fine names, changing the name every time, and chuckling amazingly at their own waggery. My mind, however, had become completely engrossed by the stout gentleman. He had kept my fancy in chase during a long day, and it was not now to be 20 diverted from the scent.

The evening gradually wore away. The 30 travelers read the papers two or three times over. Some drew round the fire and told long stories about their horses, about their adventures, their overturns, and breakings down. They discussed the credit of different merchants and different inns, and the two wags told several choice anecdotes of pretty chambermaids and kind landladies. All this passed as they were quietly taking what they called their night-caps, that is to say, strong glasses of brandy and water and sugar, or some other mixture of the kind, after which they one after another rang for "Boots" and the chambermaid, and walked off to bed in old shoes cut down into marvelously uncomfortable slippers.

There was now only one man left—a short-legged, long-bodied, plethoric fellow, with a very large, sandy head. He sat by himself, 50 with a glass of port wine negus, and a spoon; sipping and surring, and meditating and sip-

ping, until nothing was left but the spoon. He gradually fell asleep bolt upright in his chair, with the empty glass standing before him, and the candle seemed to fall asleep too, for the wick grew long, and black, and cabbaged at the end, and dimmed the little light that remained in the chamber. The gloom that now prevailed was contagious. Around hung the shapeless, and almost spectral, box-coats of departed travelers, long since buried in deep sleep. I only heard the ticking of the clock, with the deep-drawn breathings of the sleeping toppers, and the drippings of the rain, drop—drop—drop, from the eaves of the house. The church bells chimed midnight. All at once the stout gentleman began to walk over head, pacing slowly backwards and forwards. There was something extremely awful in all this, especially to one in my state of nerves. These ghastly great-coats, these guttural breathings, and the creaking footsteps of this mysterious being. His steps grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away. I could bear it no longer. I was wound up to the desperation of a hero of romance. "Be he who or what he may," said I to myself, "I'll have a sight of him!" I seized a chamber candle, and hurried up to No. 13. The door stood ajar. I hesitated—I entered. The room was deserted. There stood a large, broad-bottomed elbow-chair at a table, on which was an empty tumbler, and a *Times* newspaper, and the room smelt powerfully of Stilton cheese.

The mysterious stranger had evidently but just retired. I turned off, sorely disappointed, to my room, which had been changed to the front of the house. As I went along the corridor, I saw a large pair of boots, with dirty, waxed tops, standing at the door of a bed-chamber. They doubtless belonged to the unknown; but it would not do to disturb so redoubtable a personage in his den, he might discharge a pistol, or something worse, at my head. I went to bed, therefore, and lay awake half the night in a terribly nervous state, and even when I fell asleep, I was still haunted in my dreams by the idea of the stout gentleman and his wax-topped boots.

I slept rather late the next morning, and was awakened by some stir and bustle in the house, which I could not at first comprehend,

until getting more awake, I found there was a mail coach starting from the door. Suddenly there was a cry from below, "The gentleman has forgot his umbrellal. Look for the gentleman's umbrella in No. 13!" I heard an immediate scampering of a chambermaid along the passage, and a shrill reply as she ran, "Here it is! Here's the gentleman's umbrella!"

The mysterious stranger then was on the point of setting off. This was the only chance I should ever have of knowing him. I sprang out of bed, scrambled to the window, snatched aside the curtains, and just caught a glimpse of the rear of a person getting in at the coach-door. The skirts of a brown coat parted behind and gave me a full view of the broad disk of a pair of drab breeches. The door closed—"All right!" was the word—the coach whirled off,—and that was all I ever saw of the stout gentleman!

1822

### ADVENTURE OF THE GERMAN STUDENT

This strange, Poe-like tale of mystery and horror from *Tales of a Traveller* is perhaps the most extreme example of the influence of Irving's interest in and study of German romanticism during his residence in Germany in 1822-1823. The wink to the reader with which it concludes, however, shows Irving's general attitude toward his subject matter.

ON a stormy night, in the tempestuous times of the French revolution, a young German was returning to his lodgings, at a late hour, across the old part of Paris. The lightning gleamed, and the loud claps of thunder rattled through the lofty narrow streets—but I should first tell you something about this young German.

Gottfried Wolfgang was a young man of good family. He had studied for some time at Gottingen, but being of a visionary and enthusiastic character, he had wandered into those wild and speculative doctrines which have so often bewildered German students. His secluded life, his intense application, and the singular nature of his studies had an effect on both mind and body. His health was impaired, his imagination diseased. He had been

indulging in fanciful speculations on spiritual essences, until, like Swedenborg,<sup>1</sup> he had an ideal world of his own around him. He took up a notion, I do not know from what cause, that there was an evil influence hanging over him, an evil genius or spirit seeking to ensnare him and ensure his perdition. Such an idea, working on his melancholy temperament, produced the most gloomy effects. He became haggard and desponding. His friends discovered the mental malady preying upon him and determined that the best cure was a change of scene, he was sent, therefore, to finish his studies amidst the splendors and gayeties of Paris.

Wolfgang arrived at Paris at the breaking out of the revolution. The popular delirium at first caught his enthusiastic mind, and he was captivated by the political and philosophical theories of the day, but the scenes of blood which followed shocked his sensitive nature, disgusted him with society and the world, and made him more than ever a recluse. He shut himself up in a solitary apartment in the *Pays Lann*, the quarter of students. There, in a gloomy street not far from the monastic walls of the Sorbonne, he pursued his favorite speculations. Sometimes he spent hours together in the great libraries of Paris, those catacombs of departed authors, rummaging among their hoards of dusty and obsolete works in quest of food for his unhealthy appetite. He was, in a manner, a literary ghoul, feeding in the charnel-house of decayed literature.

Wolfgang, though solitary and recluse, was of an ardent temperament, but for a time it operated merely upon his imagination. He was too shy and ignorant of the world to make any advances to the fair, but he was a passionate admirer of female beauty, and in his lonely chamber would often lose himself in reveries on forms and faces which he had seen, and his fancy would deck out images of loveliness far surpassing the reality.

While his mind was in this excited and sublimated state, a dream produced an extraordinary effect upon him. It was of a female face of transcendent beauty. So strong was the

impression made, that he dreamt of it again and again. It haunted his thoughts by day, his slumbers by night; in fine, he became passionately enamored of this shadow of a dream. This lasted so long that it became one of those fixed ideas which haunt the minds of melancholy men, and are at times mistaken for madness.

Such was Gottfried Wolfgang, and such his situation at the time I mentioned. He was returning home late one stormy night through some of the old and gloomy streets of the *Marais*, the ancient part of Paris. The loud claps of thunder rattled among the high houses of the narrow streets. He came to the Place de Grève, the square where public executions are performed. The lightning quivered about the pinnacles of the ancient Hôtel de Ville and shed flickering gleams over the open space in front. As Wolfgang was crossing the square, he shrank back with horror at finding himself close by the guillotine. It was the height of the Reign of Terror, when this dreadful instrument of death stood ever ready, and its scaffold was continually running with the blood of the virtuous and the brave. It had that very day been actively employed in the work of carnage, and there it stood in grim array, amidst a silent and sleeping city, waiting for fresh victims.

Wolfgang's heart sickened within him, and he was turning, shuddering, from the horrible engine when he beheld a shadowy form, cowering as it were at the foot of the steps which led up to the scaffold. A succession of vivid flashes of lightning revealed it more distinctly. It was a female figure, dressed in black. She was seated on one of the lower steps of the scaffold, leaning forward, her face hid in her lap, and her long dishevelled tresses hanging to the ground, streaming with the rain which fell in torrents. Wolfgang paused. There was something awful in this solitary monument of woe. The female had the appearance of being above the common order. He knew the times to be full of vicissitude, and that many a fair head, which had once been pillowed on down, now wandered houseless. Perhaps this was some poor mourner whom the dreadful axe had rendered desolate, and who sat here heart-broken on the strand of existence, from which

<sup>1</sup> Emanuel Swedenborg (1680-1772), Swedish philosopher and theologian.

all that was dear to her had been launched into eternity.

He approached, and addressed her in the accents of sympathy. She raised her head and gazed wildly at him. What was his astonishment at beholding, by the bright glare of the lightning, the very face which had haunted him in his dreams. It was pale and disconsolate, but ravishingly beautiful.

Trembling with violent and conflicting emotions, Wolfgang again accosted her. He spoke something of her being exposed at such an hour of the night, and to the fury of such a storm, and offered to conduct her to her friends. She pointed to the guillotine with a gesture of dreadful signification.

"I have no friend on earth!" said she.

"But you have a home," said Wolfgang.

"Yes—in the grave!"

The heart of the student melted at the words.

"If a stranger dare make an offer," said he, "without danger of being misunderstood, I would offer my humble dwelling as a shelter, myself as a devoted friend. I am friendless myself in Paris, and a stranger in the land, but if my life could be of service, it is at your disposal, and should be sacrificed before harm or indignity should come to you."

There was an honest earnestness in the young man's manner that had its effect. His foreign accent, too, was in his favor, it showed him not to be a hackneyed inhabitant of Paris. Indeed, there is an eloquence in true enthusiasm that is not to be doubted. The homeless stranger confided herself implicitly to the protection of the student.

He supported her faltering steps across the Pont Neuf, and by the place where the statue of Henry the Fourth had been overthrown by the populace. The storm had abated, and the thunder rumbled at a distance. All Paris was quiet, that great volcano of human passion slumbered for a while to gather fresh strength for the next day's eruption. The student conducted his charge through the ancient streets of the *Pays Latin*, and by the dusky walls of the Sorbonne, to the great dingy hotel which he inhabited. The old portress who admitted them stared with surprise at the unusual sight of the melancholy Wolfgang with a female companion.

On entering his apartment, the student, for the first time, blushed at the scantiness and indifference of his dwelling. He had but one chamber—an old-fashioned saloon—heavily carved, and fantastically furnished with the remains of former magnificence, for it was one of those hotels in the quarter of the Luxembourg Palace, which had once belonged to nobility. It was lumbered with books and papers and all the usual apparatus of a student, and his bed stood in a recess at one end.

When lights were brought and Wolfgang had a better opportunity of contemplating the stranger, he was more than ever intoxicated by her beauty. Her face was pale, but of a dazzling fairness, set off by a profusion of raven hair that hung clustering about it. Her eyes were large and brilliant with a singular expression approaching almost to wildness. As far as her black dress permitted her shape to be seen, it was of perfect symmetry. Her whole appearance was highly striking, though she was dressed in the simplest style. The only thing approaching to an ornament which she wore was a broad black band round her neck, clasped by diamonds.

The perplexity now commenced with the student how to dispose of the helpless being thus thrown upon his protection. He thought of abandoning his chamber to her and seeking shelter for himself elsewhere. Still he was so fascinated by her charms, there seemed to be such a spell upon his thoughts and senses, that he could not tear himself from her presence. Her manner, too, was singular and unaccountable. She spoke no more of the guillotine. Her grief had abated. The attentions of the student had first won her confidence, and then, apparently, her heart. She was evidently an enthusiast like himself, and enthusiasts soon understand each other.

In the infatuation of the moment, Wolfgang avowed his passion for her. He told her the story of his mysterious dream and how she had possessed his heart before he had even seen her. She was strangely affected by his recital, and acknowledged to have felt an impulse towards him equally unaccountable. It was the time for wild theory and wild actions. Old prejudices and superstitions were done away; every thing was under the sway of the "God-

ness of Reason." Among other rubbish of the old times, the forms and ceremonies of marriage began to be considered superfluous bonds for honorable minds. Social compacts were the vogue. Wolfgang was too much of a theorist not to be tainted by the liberal doctrines of the day.

"Why should we separate?" said he, "Our hearts are united, in the eye of reason and honor we are as one. What need is there of 10 sordid forms to bind high souls together?"

The stranger listened with emotion; she had evidently received illumination at the same school.

"You have no home nor family," continued he, "let me be everything to you, or rather let us be everything to one another. If form is necessary, form shall be observed—there is my hand. I pledge myself to you forever."

"Forever!" said the stranger, solemnly.

"Forever!" repeated Wolfgang.

The stranger clasped the hand extended to her. "Then I am yours," murmured she, and sank upon his bosom.

The next morning the student left his bride sleeping and sallied forth at an early hour to seek more spacious apartments suitable to the change in his situation. When he returned, he found the stranger lying with her head hanging over the bed and one arm thrown over it. 30 He spoke to her, but received no reply. He advanced to awaken her from her uneasy posture. On taking her hand, it was cold—there was no pulsation—her face was pallid and ghastly.—In a word, she was a corpse.

Horried and frantic, he alarmed the house. A scene of confusion ensued. The police was summoned. As the officer of police entered the room, he started back beholding the corpse.

"Great heaven!" cried he, "how did this 40 woman come here?"

"Do you know anything about her?" said Wolfgang, eagerly.

"Do I?" exclaimed the officer. "she was guillotined yesterday."

He stepped forward, undid the black collar round the neck of the corpse, and the head rolled on the floor!

The student burst into a frenzy. "The fiend! the fiend has gained possession of me!" 50 shrieked he. "I am lost forever."

They tried to soothe him, but in vain. He was possessed with the frightful belief that an evil spirit had reanimated the dead body to ensnare him. He went distracted, and died in a madhouse.

Here the old gentleman with the haunted head finished his narrative.

"And is this really a fact?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A fact not to be doubted," replied the other. "I had it from the best authority. The student told it me himself. I saw him in a madhouse in Paris."

1823

1824

## LEGEND OF THE ARABIAN ASTROLOGER

The collection of tales and sketches called *The Alhambra* is centered about the castle of that name erected by the Moors during their domination in Spain and overlooking the southern province of Granada. Here Irving resided for three months in 1826, gathering notes which he later developed into narratives with a flavor of Spanish medieval legend.

In the old times, many hundred years ago, there was a Moorish king named Aben Habuz, who reigned over the kingdom of Granada. 30 He was a retired conqueror, that is to say, one who, having in his more youthful days led a life of constant foray and depredation, now that he was grown feeble and superannuated, "languished for repose," and desired nothing more than to live at peace with all the world, to husband his laurels, and to enjoy in quiet the possessions he had wrested from his neighbors.

It so happened, however, that this most reasonable and pacific old monarch had young rivals to deal with, princes full of his early passion for fame and fighting, and who were disposed to call him to account for the scores he had run up with their fathers. Certain distant districts of his own territories, also, which during the days of his vigor he had treated with a high hand, were prone, now that he languished for repose, to rise in rebellion and threaten to invest him in his capital. Thus he had foes on every side, and as Granada is surrounded by wild and craggy



mountains, which hide the approach of an enemy, the unfortunate Aben Habuz was kept in a constant state of vigilance and alarm, not knowing in what quarter hostilities might break out.

It was in vain that he built watchtowers on the mountains and stationed guards at every pass with orders to make fires by night and smoke by day, on the approach of an enemy. His alert foes, baffling every precaution, would break out of some unthought-of defile, ravage his lands beneath his very nose, and then make off with prisoners and booty to the mountains. Was ever peaceable and retired conqueror in a more uncomfortable predicament?

While Aben Habuz was harassed by these perplexities and molestations, an ancient Arabian physician arrived at his court. His gray beard descended to his girdle, and he had every mark of extreme age, yet he had travelled almost the whole way from Egypt on foot, with no other aid than a staff, marked with hieroglyphics. His fame had preceded him. His name was Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub, he was said to have lived ever since the days of Mahomet, and to be son of Abu Ayub, the last of the companions of the Prophet. He had, when a child, followed the conquering army of Amru into Egypt, where he had remained many years studying the dark sciences, and particularly magic, among the Egyptian priests.

It was, moreover, said that he had found out the secret of prolonging life, by means of which he had arrived to the great age of upwards of two centuries, though, as he did not discover the secret until well stricken in years, he could only perpetuate his gray hairs and wrinkles.

This wonderful old man was honorably entertained by the king, who, like most superannuated monarchs, began to take physicians unto great favor. He would have assigned him an apartment in his palace, but the astrologer preferred a cave in the side of the hill which rises above the city of Granada, being the same on which the Alhambra has since been built. He caused the cave to be enlarged so as to form a spacious and lofty hall, with a circular hole at the top, through which, as through a well, he could see the heavens and

behold the stars even at mid-day. The walls of this hall were covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics with cabalistic symbols, and with the figures of the stars in their signs. This hall he furnished with many implements, fabricated under his directions by cunning artificers of Granada, but the occult properties of which were known only to himself.

In a little while the sage Ibrahim became the bosom counsellor of the king, who applied to him for advice in every emergency. Aben Habuz was once inveighing against the injustice of his neighbors, and bewailing the restless vigilance he had to observe to guard himself against their invasions, when he had finished, the astrologer remained silent for a moment, and then replied, "Know, O king, that, when I was in Egypt, I beheld a great marvel devised by a pagan priestess of old. On a mountain, above the city of Borsa, and overlooking the great valley of the Nile, was a figure of a ram, and above it a figure of a cock, both of molten brass, and turning upon a pivot. Whenever the country was threatened with invasion, the ram would turn in the direction of the enemy, and the cock would crow, upon this the inhabitants of the city knew of the danger, and of the quarter from which it was approaching, and could take timely means to guard against it."

"God is great!" exclaimed the pacific Aben Habuz, "what a treasure would be such a ram to keep an eye upon these mountains around me, and then such a cock, to crow in time of danger! Allah Akbar! how securely I might sleep in my palace with such sentinels on the top!"

The astrologer waited until the ecstasies of the king had subsided, and then proceeded

"After the victorious Amru (may he rest in peace) had finished his conquest of Egypt, I remained among the priests of the land, studying the rites and ceremonies of their idolatrous faith, and seeking to make myself master of the hidden knowledge for which they are renowned. I was one day seated on the banks of the Nile, conversing with an ancient priest, when he pointed to the mighty pyramids which rose like mountains out of the neighboring desert. "All that we can teach thee," said he, "is nothing to the knowledge

locked up in those mighty piles. In the center of the central pyramid is a sepulchral chamber, in which is enclosed the mummy of the high-priest who aided in rearing that stupendous pile; and with him is buried a wondrous book of knowledge, containing all the secrets of magic and art. This book was given to Adam after his fall, and was handed down from generation to generation to King Solomon the Wise, and by its aid he built the Temple of Jerusalem. How it came into the possession of the builder of the pyramids is known to Him alone who knows all things "

"When I heard these words of the Egyptian priest, my heart burned to get possession of that book. I could command the services of many of the soldiers of our conquering army, and of the number of the native Egyptians these I set to work, and pierced the solid mass of the pyramid, until, after great toil, I came upon one of its interior and hidden passages. Following this up, and threading a fearful labyrinth, I penetrated into the very heart of the pyramid, even to the sepulchral chamber, where the mummy of the high-priest had lain for ages. I broke through the outer casts of the mummy, unfolded its many wrappers and bandages, and at length found the precious volume on its bosom. I seized it with a trembling hand, and groped my way out of the pyramid, leaving the mummy in its dark and silent sepulcher, there to await the final day of resurrection and judgment "

"Son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed Aben Habuz, "thou hast been a great traveller, and seen marvellous things, but of what avail to me is the secret of the pyramid, and the volume of knowledge of the wise Solomon?"

"Thus it is, O king! By the study of that book I am instructed in all magic arts, and can command the assistance of genii to accomplish my plans. The mystery of the Talisman of Borsá is therefore familiar to me, and such a talisman can I make, nay, one of greater virtues."

"O wise son of Abu Ayub," cried Aben Habuz, "better were such a talisman than the watch-towers on the hills, and sentinels upon the borders. Give me such a safeguard, and the riches of my treasury are at thy command."

The astrologer immediately set to work to gratify the wishes of the monarch. He caused a great tower to be erected upon the top of the royal palace, which stood on the brow of the hill of the Albaycin. The tower was built of stones brought from Egypt, and taken, it is said, from one of the pyramids. In the upper part of the tower was a circular hall, with windows looking towards every point of the compass, and before each window was a table, on which was arranged, as on a chessboard, a mimic army of horse and foot, with the effigy of the potentate that ruled in that direction, all carved of wood. To each of these tables there was a small lance, no bigger than a bodkin, on which were engraved certain Chaldaic characters. This hall was kept constantly closed, by a gate of brass, with a great lock of steel, the key of which was in possession of the king.

On the top of the tower was a bronze figure of a Moorish horseman, fixed on a pivot, with a shield on one arm, and his lance elevated perpendicularly. The face of this horseman was towards the city, as if keeping guard over it, but if any foe were at hand, the figure would turn in that direction, and would level the lance as if for action.

When this talisman was finished, Aben Habuz was all impatient to try its virtues, and longed as ardently for an invasion as he had ever sighed after repose. His desire was soon gratified. Tidings were brought, early one morning, by the sentinel appointed to watch the tower, that the face of the bronze horseman was turned towards the mountains of Elvira, and that his lance pointed directly against the Pass of Lope.

"Let the drums and trumpets sound to arms, and all Granada be put on the alert," said Aben Habuz.

"O king," said the astrologer, "let not your city be disquieted, nor your warriors called to arms, we need no aid of force to deliver you from your enemies. Dismiss your attendants, and let us proceed alone to the secret hall of the tower."

The ancient Aben Habuz mounted the staircase of the tower, leaning on the arm of the still more ancient Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub. They unlocked the bronze door and entered. The window that looked towards the Pass of

Lope was open. "In this direction," said the astrologer, "lies the danger, approach, O king, and behold the mystery of the table."

King Aben Habuz approached the seeming chessboard, on which were arranged the small wooden effigies, when, to his surprise, he perceived that they were all in motion. The horses pranced and curveted, the warriors brandished their weapons, and there was a faint sound of drums and trumpets, and the clang of arms, and neighing of steeds, but all no louder, nor more distinct, than the hum of the bee, or the summer-fly, in the drowsy ear of him who lies at noontide in the shade.

"Behold, O king," said the astrologer, "a proof that thy enemies are even now in the field. They must be advancing through yonder mountains, by the Pass of Lope. Would you produce a panic and confusion amongst them, and cause them to retreat without loss of life, strike these effigies with the butt-end of this magic lance, would you cause bloody feud and carnage, strike with the point."

A livid streak passed across the countenance of Aben Habuz, he seized the lance with trembling eagerness, his gray beard wagged with exultation as he tottered toward the table. "Son of Abu Ayub," exclaimed he, in chuckling tone, "I think we will have a little blood!"

So saying, he thrust the magic lance into some of the pigmy effigies, and belabored others with the butt-end, upon which the former fell as dead upon the board, and the rest, turning upon each other, began, pell-mell, a chance-medley fight.

It was with difficulty the astrologer could stay the hand of the most pacific of monarchs, and prevent him from absolutely exterminating his foes, at length, he prevailed upon him to leave the tower, and to send out scouts to the mountains by the Pass of Lope.

They returned with the intelligence that a Christian army had advanced through the heart of the Sierra, almost within sight of Granada, where a dissension had broken out among them, they had turned their weapons against each other, and after much slaughter had retreated over the border.

Aben Habuz was transported with joy on thus proving the efficacy of the talisman. "At length," said he, "I shall lead a life of

tranquility, and have all my enemies in my power. O wise son of Abu Ayub, what can I bestow on thee in reward for such a blessing?"

"The wants of an old man and a philosopher, O king, are few and simple, grant me but the means of fitting up my cave as a suitable hermitage, and I am content."

"How noble is the moderation of the truly wise!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, secretly pleased at the cheapness of the recompense. He summoned his treasurer, and bade him dispense whatever sums might be required by Ibrahim to complete and furnish his hermitage.

The astrologer now gave orders to have various chambers hewn out of the solid rock, so as to form ranges of apartments connected with his astrological hall, these he caused to be furnished with luxurious ottomans and divans, and the walls to be hung with the richest silks of Damascus. "I am an old man," said he, "and can no longer rest my bones on stone couches, and these damp walls require covering."

He had baths too constructed, and provided with all kinds of perfumes and aromatic oils. "For a bath," said he, "is necessary to counteract the rigidity of age, and to restore freshness and suppleness to the frame withered by study."

He caused the apartments to be hung with innumerable silver and crystal lamps, which he filled with a fragrant oil prepared according to a receipt discovered by him in the tombs of Egypt. This oil was perpetual in its nature, and diffused a soft radiance like the tempered light of day. "The light of the sun," said he, "is too garish and violent for the eyes of an old man, and the light of the lamp is more congenial to the studies of a philosopher."

The treasurer of King Aben Habuz groaned at the sums daily demanded to fit up this hermitage, and he carried his complaints to the king. The royal word, however, had been given, Aben Habuz shrugged his shoulders. "We must have patience," said he, "this old man has taken his idea of a philosophic retreat from the interior of the pyramids, and of the vast ruins of Egypt, but all things have an end, and so will the furnishing of his cavern."

The king was in the right; the hermitage

was at length complete, and formed a sumptuous subterranean palace. The astrologer expressed himself perfectly content, and shutting himself up, remained for three whole days buried in study. At the end of that time he appeared again before the treasurer. "One thing more is necessary," said he, "one trifling solace for the intervals of mental labor."

"O wise Ibrahim, I am bound to furnish everything necessary for thy solitude, what else dost thou require?"

"I would fain have a few dancing-women."

"Dancing-women!" echoed the treasurer, with surprise.

"Dancing-women," replied the sage, gravely "and let them be young and fair to look upon, for the sight of youth and beauty is refreshing. A few will suffice, for I am a philosopher of simple habits and easily satisfied."

While the philosophic Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub passed his time thus sagely in his hermitage, the pacific Aben Habuz carried on furious campaigns in effigy in his tower. It was a glorious thing for an old man, like himself, of quiet habits, to have war made easy, and to be enabled to amuse himself in his chamber by brushing away whole armies like so many swarms of flies.

For a time he rioted in the indulgence of his humors, and even taunted and insulted his neighbors, to induce them to make incursions, but by degrees they grew wary from repeated disasters, until no one ventured to invade his territories. For many months the bronze horseman remained on the peace establishment, with his lance elevated in the air, and the worthy old monarch began to repine at the want of his accustomed sport, and to grow peevish at his monotonous tranquility.

At length, one day, the talismanic horseman veered suddenly round, and lowering his lance, made a dead point towards the mountains of Guadix. Aben Habuz hastened to his tower, but the magic table in that direction remained quiet: not a single warrior was in motion. Perplexed at the circumstance, he sent forth a troop of horse to scour the mountains and reconnoiter. They returned after three days' absence.

"We have searched every mountain pass," said they, "but not a helm or a spear was

stirring. All that we have found in the course of our foray, was a Christian damsel of surpassing beauty, sleeping at noontide beside a fountain, whom we have brought away captive."

"A damsel of surpassing beauty!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, his eyes gleaming with animation, "let her be conducted into my presence."

The beautiful damsel was accordingly conducted into his presence. She was arrayed with all the luxury of ornament that had prevailed among the Gothic Spaniards at the time of the Arabian conquest. Pearls of dazzling whiteness were entwined with her raven tresses, and jewels sparkled on her forehead, rivaling the luster of her eyes. Around her neck was a golden chain, to which was suspended a silver lyre, which hung by her side.

The flashes of her dark refulgent eye were like sparks of fire on the withered, yet combustible, heart of Aben Habuz, the swimming voluptuousness of her gait made his senses reel. "Fairest of women," cried he, with rapture, "who and what art thou?"

"The daughter of one of the Gothic princes, who but lately ruled over this land. The armies of my father have been destroyed as if by magic, among these mountains, he has been driven into exile, and his daughter is a captive."

"Beware, O king!" whispered Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ayub, "this may be one of those northern sorceresses of whom we have heard, who assume the most seductive forms to beguile the unwary. Methinks I read witchcraft in her eye, and sorcery in every movement. Doubtless this is the enemy pointed out by the talisman."

"Son of Abu Ayub," replied the king, "thou art a wise man, I grant, a conjurer for aught I know; but thou art little versed in the ways of woman. In that knowledge will I yield to no man, no, not to the wise Solomon himself, notwithstanding the number of his wives and concubines. As to this damsel, I see no harm in her, she is fair to look upon, and finds favor in my eyes."

"Hearken, O king!" replied the astrologer. "I have given thee many victories by means of my talisman, but have never shared any of the spoil. Give me then this stray captive, to solace me in my solitude with her silver lyre."

If she be indeed a sorceress, I have counter spells that set her charms at defiance "

"What! more women!" cried Aben Habuz  
 "Hast thou not already dancing-women enough to solace thee?"

"Dancing-women have I, it is true, but 110  
 singing-women I would fain have a little  
 minstrelsy to refresh my mind when weary  
 with the toils of study "

"A truce with thy hermit cravings," said the 10  
 king, impatiently "This damsel have I marked  
 for my own I see much comfort in her, even  
 such comfort as David, the father of Solomon  
 the Wise, found in the society of Abishag the  
 Shunamite "

Further solicitations and remonstrances of  
 the astrologer only provoked a more premp-  
 tory reply from the monarch, and they parted  
 in high displeasure The sage shut himself  
 up in his hermitage to brood over his disap- 20  
 pointment; ere he departed, however, he gave  
 the king one more warning to beware of his  
 dangerous captive But where is the old man  
 in love that will listen to counsel? Aben Habuz  
 resigned himself to the full sway of his passion  
 His only study was how to render himself  
 amiable in the eyes of the Gothic beauty He  
 had not youth to recommend him, it is true,  
 but then he had riches, and when a lover is  
 old, he is generally generous The Zaccain of 30  
 Granada was ransacked for the most precious  
 merchandise of the East, silks, jewels, precious  
 gems, exquisite perfumes, all that Asia and  
 Africa yielded of rich and rare, were lavished  
 upon the princess All kinds of spectacles and  
 festivities were devised for her entertainment,  
 minstrelsy, dancing tournaments, bullfights;  
 —Granada for a time was a scene of perpetual  
 pageant. The Gothic princess regarded all this  
 splendor with the air of one accustomed to 40  
 magnificence She received everything as a  
 homage due to her rank, or rather to her  
 beauty, for beauty is more lofty in its exac-  
 tions even than rank. Nay, she seemed to take  
 a secret pleasure in exciting the monarch to  
 expenses that made his treasury shrink, and  
 then treating his extravagant generosity as a  
 mere matter of course. With all his assiduity  
 and munificence, also, the venerable lover  
 could not flatter himself that he had made any 50  
 impression on her heart. She never frowned

on him, it is true, but then she never smiled.  
 Whenever he began to plead his passion, she  
 struck her silver lyre There was a mystic  
 charm in the sound In an instant the monarch  
 began to nod, a drowsiness stole over him,  
 and he gradually sank into a sleep, from which  
 he awoke wonderfully refreshed, but per-  
 fectly cooled, for the time, of his passion.  
 This was very baffling to his suit, but then  
 these slumbers were accompanied by agree-  
 able dreams, which completely enthralled the  
 senses of the drowsy lover; so he continued  
 to dream on, while all Granada scoffed at his  
 infatuation, and groaned at the treasures lav-  
 ished for a song

At length a danger burst on the head of  
 Aben Habuz, against which his talisman  
 yielded him no warning An insurrection  
 broke out in his very capital, his palace was  
 surrounded by an armed rabble, who menaced  
 his life and the life of his Christian paramour  
 A spark of his ancient warlike spirit was  
 awakened in the breast of the monarch At  
 the head of a handful of his guards he sallied  
 forth, put the rebels to flight, and crushed the  
 insurrection in the bud

When quiet was again restored, he sought  
 the astrologer, who still remained shut up in  
 his hermitage, chewing the bitter cud of re-  
 sentment.

Aben Habuz approached him with a con-  
 ciliatory tone "O wise son of Abu Ayub,"  
 said he, "well didst thou predict dangers to  
 me from this captive beauty tell me then,  
 thou who art so quick at foreseeing peril,  
 what I should do to avert it "

"Put from thee the infidel damsel who is  
 the cause."

"Sooner would I part with my kingdom,"  
 cried Aben Habuz

"Thou art in danger of losing both," re-  
 plied the astrologer

"Be not harsh and angry, O most profound  
 of philosophers, consider the double distress  
 of a monarch and a lover, and devise some  
 means of protecting me from the evils by  
 which I am menaced I care not for grandeur,  
 I care not for power, I languish only for re-  
 pose, would that I had some quiet retreat  
 where I might take refuge from the world,  
 and all its cares, and pomps, and troubles, and

devote the remainder of my days to tranquillity and love."

The astrologer regarded him for a moment from under his bushy eyebrows.

"And what wouldst thou give, if I could provide thee such a retreat?"

"Thou shouldst name thy own reward, and whatever it might be, if within the scope of my power, as my soul liveth, it should be thine."

"Thou hast heard, O king, of the garden of Irem, one of the prodigies of Arabia the happy"

"I have heard of that garden, it is recorded in the Koran, even in the chapter entitled 'The Dawn of Day' I have, moreover, heard marvellous things related of it by pilgrims who had been to Mecca, but I considered them wild fables, such as travellers are wont to tell who have visited remote countries"

"Discredit not, O king, the tales of travellers," rejoined the astrologer, gravely, "for they contain precious rarities of knowledge brought from the ends of the earth. As to the palace and garden of Irem, what is generally told of them is true, I have seen them with mine own eyes,—listen to my adventure, for it has a bearing upon the object of your request.

"In my younger days, when a mere Arab of the desert, I tended my father's camels. In traversing the desert of Aden, one of them strayed from the rest, and was lost. I searched after it for several days, but in vain, until, wearied and faint, I laid myself down at noon-tide, and slept under a palm-tree by the side of a scanty well. When I awoke I found myself at the gate of a city. I entered, and beheld noble streets, and squares, and market-places, but all were silent and without an inhabitant. I wandered on until I came to a sumptuous palace, with a garden adorned with fountains and fish-ponds, and groves and flowers, and orchards laden with delicious fruit, but still no one was to be seen. Upon which, appalled at this loneliness, I hastened to depart, and, after issuing forth at the gate of the city, I turned to look upon the place, but it was no longer to be seen; nothing but the silent desert extended before my eyes.

"In the neighborhood I met with an aged

dervish, learned in the traditions and secrets of the land, and related to him what had befallen me. 'Thus,' said he, 'is the far-famed garden of Irem, one of the wonders of the desert. It only appears at times to some wanderer like thyself, gladdening him with the sight of towers and palaces and garden-walls overhung with richly-laden fruit-trees, and then vanishes, leaving nothing but a lonely desert. And thus is the story of it. In old times, when this country was inhabited by the Addites, King Sheddad, the son of Ad, the great-grandeur, his heart was puffed up with pride and arrogance, and he determined to build a royal palace, with gardens which should rival all related in the Koran of the celestial paradise. But the curse of heaven fell upon him for his presumption. He and his subjects were swept from the earth, and his splendid city, and palace, and gardens, were laid under a perpetual spell, which hides them from human sight, excepting that they are seen at intervals, by way of keeping his sin in perpetual remembrance."

"This story, O king, and the wonders I had seen, ever dwelt in my mind, and in after-years, when I had been in Egypt, and was possessed of the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise, I determined to return and revisit the garden of Irem. I did so, and found it revealed to my instructed sight. I took possession of the palace of Sheddad, and passed several days in his mock paradise. The genii who watch over the palace were obedient to my magic power, and revealed to me the spells by which the whole garden had been, as it were, conjured into existence, and by which it was rendered invisible. Such a palace and garden, O king, can I make for thee, even here, on the mountain above thy city. Do I not know all the secret spells? and am I not in possession of the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise?"

"O wise son of Abu Ayubi!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, trembling with eagerness, "thou art a traveller indeed, and hast seen and learned marvellous things! Contrive me such a paradise, and ask any reward, even to the half of my kingdom."

"Alas!" replied the other, "thou knowest I am an old man, and a philosopher, and easily

satisfied; all the reward I ask is the first beast of burden, with its load, which shall enter the magic portal of the palace."

The monarch gladly agreed to so moderate a stipulation, and the astrologer began his work. On the summit of the hill, immediately above his subterranean hermitage, he caused a great gateway or barbican to be erected, opening through the center of a strong tower

There was an outer vestibule or porch, with a lofty arch, and within it a portal secured by massive gates. On the keystone of the portal the astrologer, with his own hand, wrought the figure of a huge key, and on the keystone of the outer arch of the vestibule, which was loftier than that of the portal, he carved a gigantic hand. These were potent talismans, over which he repeated many sentences in an unknown tongue.

When this gateway was finished, he shut himself up for two days in his astrological hall, engaged in secret incantations, on the third he ascended the hill, and passed the whole day on its summit. At a late hour of the night he came down, and presented himself before Aben Habuz. "At length, O king," said he, "my labor is accomplished. On the summit of the hill stands one of the most delectable palaces that ever the head of man devised, or the heart of man desired. It contains sumptuous halls and galleries, delicious gardens, cool fountains, and fragrant baths, in a word, the whole mountain is converted into a paradise. Like the garden of Irem, it is protected by a mighty charm, which hides it from the view and search of mortals, excepting such as possess the secret of its talismans."

"Enough!" cried Aben Habuz, joyfully, "tomorrow morning with the first light we will ascend and take possession." The happy monarch slept but little that night. Scarcely had the rays of the sun begun to play about the snowy summit of the Sierra Nevada, when he mounted his steed, and, accompanied only by a few chosen attendants, ascended a steep and narrow road leading up the hill. Beside him, on a white palfrey, rode the Gothic princess, her whole dress sparkling with jewels, while round her neck was suspended her silver lyre. The astrologer walked on the other side of the king, assisting his steps with

his hieroglyphic staff, for he never mounted steed of any kind.

Aben Habuz looked to see the towers of the palace brightening above him, and the embowered terraces of its gardens stretching along the heights, but as yet nothing of the kind was to be descried. "That is the mystery and safeguard of the place," said the astrologer, "nothing can be discerned until you have passed the spellbound gateway, and been put in possession of the place."

As they approached the gateway, the astrologer paused, and pointed out to the king the mystic hand and key carved upon the portal of the arch. "These," said he, "are the talismans which guard the entrance to this paradise. Until yonder hand shall reach down and seize that key, neither mortal power nor magic artifice can prevail against the lord of this mountain."

While Aben Habuz was gazing, with open mouth and silent wonder, at these mystic talismans, the palfrey of the princess proceeded, and bore her in at the portal, to the very center of the barbican.

"Behold," cried the astrologer, "my promised reward, the first animal with its burden which should enter the magic gateway."

Aben Habuz smiled at what he considered a pleasantry of the ancient man, but when he found him to be in earnest, his gray beard trembled with indignation.

"Son of Abu Ayub," said he, sternly, "what equivocation is this? Thou knowest the meaning of my promise: the first beast of burden with its load, that should enter this portal. Take the strongest mule in my stables, load it with the most precious things of my treasury, and it is thine, but dare not raise thy thoughts to her who is the delight of my heart."

"What need I of wealth?" cried the astrologer, scornfully, "have I not the book of knowledge of Solomon the Wise, and through it the command of the secret treasures of the earth? The princess is mine by right, thy royal word is pledged; I claim her as my own."

The princess looked down haughtily from her palfrey, and a light smile of scorn curled her rosy lip at this dispute between two gray-

beards for the possession of youth and beauty. The wrath of the monarch got the better of his discretion. "Base son of the desert," cried he, "thou mayst be master of many arts, but know me for thy master, and presume not to juggle with thy king."

"My master! my king!" echoed the astrologer,—"the monarch of a molehill to claim sway over him who possesses the talismans of Solomon! Farewell, Aben Habuz, 10 reign over thy petty kingdom, and revel in thy paradise of fools; for me, I will laugh at thee in my philosophic retirement."

So saying, he seized the bridle of the palfrey, smote the earth with his staff, and sank with the Gothic princess through the center of the barbican. The earth closed over them and no trace remained of the opening by which they had descended.

Aben Habuz was struck dumb for a time 20 with astonishment. Recovering himself, he ordered a thousand workmen to dig, with pickaxe and spade, into the ground where the astrologer had disappeared. They digged and digged, but in vain, the flinty bosom of the hill resisted their implements, or if they did penetrate a little way, the earth filled in again as fast as they threw it out. Aben Habuz sought the mouth of the cavern at the foot of the hill, leading to the subterranean palace 30 of the astrologer, but it was nowhere to be found. Where once had been an entrance, was now a solid surface of primeval rock. With the disappearance of Ibralum Ebn Abu Ayub ceased the benefit of his talismans. The bronze horseman remained fixed, with his face turned toward the hill, and his spear pointed to the spot where the astrologer had descended, as if there still lurked the deadliest foe of Aben Habuz.

From time to time the sound of music, and the tones of a female voice, could be faintly heard from the bosom of the hill, and a peasant one day brought word to the king, that in the preceding night he had found a fissure in the rock, by which he had crept in, until he looked down into a subterranean hall, in which sat the astrologer, on a magnificent divan, slumbering and nodding to the silver lyre of the princess, which seemed to hold a 50 magic sway over his senses.

Aben Habuz sought the fissure in the rock, but it was again closed. He renewed the attempt to unearth his rival, but all in vain. The spell of the hand and key was too potent to be counteracted by human power. As to the summit of the mountain, the site of the promised palace and garden, it remained a naked waste, either the boasted elysium was hidden from sight by enchantment, or was a mere fable of the astrologer. The world charitably supposed the latter, and some used to call the place "The King's Folly", while others named it "The King's Paradise."

To add to the chagrin of Aben Habuz, the neighbors whom he had defied and taunted, and cut up at his leisure while master of the talismanic horseman, finding him no longer protected by magic spell, made inroads into his territories from all sides, and the remainder of the life of the most pacific of monarchs was a tissue of turmoils.

At length Aben Habuz died, and was buried. Ages have since rolled away. The Alhambra has been built on the eventful mountain, and in some measure realizes the fabled delights of the garden of Irem. The spell-bound gateway still exists entire, protected no doubt by the mystic hand and key, and now forms the Gate of Justice, the grand entrance to the fortress. Under that gateway, it is said, the old astrologer remains in his subterranean hall, nodding on his divan, lulled by the silver lyre of the princess.

The old invalid sentinels who mount guard at the gate hear the strains occasionally in the summer nights, and, yielding to their soporific power, doze quietly at their posts. Nay, so drowsy an influence pervades the place, that even those who watch by day may 40 generally be seen nodding on the stone benches of the barbican, or sleeping under the neighboring trees, so that in fact it is the drowsiest military post in all Christendom. All this, say the ancient legends, will endure from age to age. The princess will remain captive to the astrologer, and the astrologer, bound up in magic slumber by the princess, until the last day, unless the mystic hand shall grasp the fated key, and dispel the whole charm of this enchanted mountain.



From THE LIFE AND VOYAGES  
OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

BOOK III, CHAPTER IV

[*The Discovery of Land*]

THE situation of Columbus was daily becoming more and more critical. In proportion as he approached the regions where he expected to find land, the impatience of his crews augmented. The favorable signs which increased his confidence, were denied by them as delusive, and there was danger of their rebelling, and obliging him to turn back, when on the point of realizing the object of all his labors. They beheld themselves with dismay still wafted onward, over the boundless wastes of what appeared to them a mere watery desert, surrounding the habitable world. What was to become of them should their provisions fail? Their ships were too weak and defective even for the great voyage they had already made, but if they were sullen to press forward, adding at every moment to the immense expanse behind them, how should they ever be able to return, having no intervening port where they might victual and refit?

In this way they fed each other's discontents, gathering together in little knots, and fomenting a spirit of mutinous opposition; and when we consider the natural fire of the Spanish temperament and its impatience of control, and that a great part of these men were sailing on compulsion, we cannot wonder that there was imminent danger of their breaking forth into open rebellion and compelling Columbus to turn back. In their secret conferences they exclaimed against him as a desperado, bent, in a mad fantasy, upon doing something extravagant to render himself notorious. What were their sufferings and dangers to one evidently content to sacrifice his own life for the chance of distinction? What obligations bound them to continue on with him, or when were the terms of *their* agreement to be considered as fulfilled? They had already penetrated unknown seas, untraversed by a sail, far beyond where man had ever before ventured. They had done enough to gain themselves a character for courage and

hardihood in undertaking such an enterprise and persisting in it so far. How much further were they to go in quest of a merely conjectured land? Were they to sail on until they perished, or until all return became impossible? In such case they would be the authors of their own destruction.

On the other hand, should they consult their safety, and turn back before too late, who would blame them? Any complaints made by Columbus would be of no weight, he was a foreigner without friends or influence; his schemes had been condemned by the learned, and discountenanced by people of all ranks. He had no party to uphold him, and a host of opponents whose pride of opinion would be gratified by his failure. Or, as an effectual means of preventing his complaints, they might throw him into the sea, and give out that he had fallen overboard while busy with his instruments contemplating the stars, a report which no one would have either the inclination or the means to controvert.

Columbus was not ignorant of the mutinous disposition of his crew, but he still maintained a serene and steady countenance, soothing some with gentle words, endeavoring to stimulate the pride or avarice of others, and openly menacing the refractory with signal punishment, should they do any thing to impede the voyage.

On the 25th of September, the wind again became favorable, and they were able to resume their course directly to the west. The airs being light, and the sea calm, the vessels sailed near to each other, and Columbus had much conversation with Martin Alonso Pinzon on the subject of a chart, which the former had sent three days before on board of the *Pinta*. Pinzon thought that, according to the indications of the map, they ought to be in the neighborhood of Cipango, and the other islands which the admiral had therein delineated. Columbus partly entertained the same idea, but thought it possible that the ships might have been borne out of their track by the prevalent currents, or that they had not come so far as the pilots had reckoned. He desired that the chart might be returned, and Pinzon tying it to the end of a cord, flung it on board to him. While Columbus, his

pilot, and several of his experienced mariners were studying the map, and endeavoring to make out from it their actual position, they heard a shout from the *Pinta*, and looking up, beheld Martin Alonso Pinzon mounted on the stern of his vessel, crying "Land! land! Señor, I claim my reward!" He pointed at the same time to the southwest, where there was indeed an appearance of land at about twenty-five leagues' distance. Upon this Columbus threw himself on his knees and returned thanks to God, and Martin Alonso repeated the *Gloria in excelsis*, in which he was joined by his own crew and that of the admiral.

The seamen now mounted to the masthead or climbed about the rigging, straining their eyes in the direction pointed out. The conviction became so general of land in that quarter, and the joy of the people so ungovernable, that Columbus found it necessary to vary from his usual course, and stand all night to the southwest. The morning light, however, put an end to all their hopes, as to a dream. The fancied land proved to be nothing but an evening cloud, and had vanished in the night. With dejected hearts they once more resumed their western course, from which Columbus would never have varied, but in compliance with their clamorous wishes.

For several days they continued on with the same propitious breeze, tranquil sea, and mild, delightful weather. The water was so calm that the sailors amused themselves with swimming about the vessel. Dolphins began to abound, and flying fish, darting into the air, fell upon the decks. The continued signs of land diverted the attention of the crews, and insensibly beguiled them onward.

On the 1st of October, according to the reckoning of the pilot of the admiral's ship, they had come five hundred and eighty leagues west since leaving the Canary islands. The reckoning which Columbus showed the crew, was five hundred and eighty-four, but the reckoning which he kept privately, was seven hundred and seven. On the following day, the weeds floated from east to west, and on the third day no birds were to be seen.

The crews now began to fear that they had passed between islands, from one to the other of which the birds had been flying. Columbus

had also some doubts of the kind, but refused to alter his westward course. The people again uttered murmurs and menaces, but on the following day they were visited by such flights of birds, and the various indications of land became so numerous, that from a state of despondency they passed to one of confident expectation.

Eager to obtain the promised pension, the seamen were continually giving the cry of land, on the least appearance of the kind. To put a stop to these false alarms, which produced continual disappointments, Columbus declared that should any one give such notice, and land not be discovered within three days afterwards, he should thenceforth forfeit all claim to the reward.

On the evening of the 6th of October, Martin Alonso Pinzon began to lose confidence in their present course, and proposed that they should stand more to the southward. Columbus, however, still persisted in steering directly west. Observing the difference of opinion in a person so important in his squadron as Pinzon, and fearing that chance or design might scatter the ships, he ordered that, should either of the caravels be separated from him, it should stand to the west, and endeavor as soon as possible to join company again; he directed, also, that the vessels should keep near to him at sunrise and sunset, as at these times the state of the atmosphere is most favorable to the discovery of distant land.

On the morning of the 7th of October, at sunrise, several of the admiral's crew thought they beheld land in the west, but so indistinctly that no one ventured to proclaim it, lest he should be mistaken, and forfeit all chance of the reward. The *Niña*, however, being a good sailer, pressed forward to ascertain the fact. In a little while a flag was hoisted at her masthead, and a gun discharged, being the preconcerted signals for land. New joy was awakened throughout the little squadron, and every eye was turned to the west. As they advanced, however, their cloud-built hopes faded away, and before evening the fancied land had again melted into air.

The crews now sank into a degree of dejection proportioned to their recent excitement, but new circumstances occurred to

arouse them. Columbus, having observed great flights of small field-birds going towards the southwest, concluded they must be secure of some neighboring land, where they would find food and a resting-place. He knew the importance which the Portuguese voyagers attached to the flight of birds, by following which they had discovered most of their islands. He had now come seven hundred and fifty leagues, the distance at which he had computed to find the island of Cipango, as there was no appearance of it, he might have missed it through some mistake in the latitude. He determined, therefore, on the evening of the 7th of October to alter his course to the west-southwest, the direction in which the birds generally flew, and continue that direction for at least two days. After all, it was no great deviation from his main course, and would meet the wishes of the Pinzons, as well as be inspiring to his followers generally.

For three days they stood in this direction, and the further they went the more frequent and encouraging were the signs of land. Flights of small birds of various colors, some of them such as sing in the fields, came flying about the ships, and then continued towards the southwest, and others were heard also flying by in the night. Tunny fish played about the smooth sea, and a heron, a pelican, and a duck, were seen, all bound in the same direction. The herbage which floated by was fresh and green, as if recently from land, and the air, Columbus observed, was sweet and fragrant as April breezes in Seville.

All these, however, were regarded by the crews as so many delusions beguiling them on to destruction, and when on the evening of the third day they beheld the sun go down upon a shoreless ocean, they broke forth into turbulent clamor. They exclaimed against this obstinacy in tempting fate by continuing on into a boundless sea. They insisted upon turning homeward, and abandoning the voyage as hopeless. Columbus endeavored to pacify them by gentle words and promises of large rewards, but finding that they only increased in clamor, he assumed a decided tone. He told them it was useless to murmur, the expedition had been sent by the sovereigns to seek the Indies, and, happen what might, he

was determined to persevere, until, by the blessing of God, he should accomplish the enterprise.

Columbus was now at open defiance with his crew, and his situation became desperate. Fortunately the manifestations of the vicinity of land were such on the following day as no longer to admit a doubt. Besides a quantity of fresh weeds, such as grow in rivers, they saw a green fish of a kind which keeps about rocks, then a branch of thorn with berries on it, and recently separated from the tree, floated by them, then they picked up a reed, a small board, and, above all, a staff artificially carved. All gloom and mutiny now gave way to sanguine expectation, and throughout the day each one was eagerly on the watch, in hopes of being the first to discover the long-sought-for land.

In the evening, when, according to invariable custom on board of the admiral's ship, the mariners had sung the *salve regina*, or vesper hymn to the Virgin, he made an impressive address to his crew. He pointed out the goodness of God in thus conducting them by soft and favoring breezes across a tranquil ocean, cheering their hopes continually with fresh signs, increasing as their fears augmented, and thus leading and guiding them to a promised land. He now reminded them of the orders he had given on leaving the Canaries, that, after sailing westward seven hundred leagues, they should not make sail after midnight. Present appearances authorized such a precaution. He thought it probable they would make land that very night, he ordered, therefore, a vigilant lookout to be kept from the forecabin, promising to whomsoever should make the discovery, a doublet of velvet, in addition to the pension to be given by the sovereigns.

The breeze had been fresh all day, with more sea than usual, and they had made great progress. At sunset they had stood again to the west, and were ploughing the waves at a rapid rate, the *Pinta* keeping the lead, from her superior sailing. The greatest animation prevailed throughout the ships, not an eye was closed that night. As the evening darkened, Columbus took his station on the top of the castle or cabin on the high poop of his

vessel, ranging his eye along the dusky horizon, and maintaining an intense and unremitting watch. About ten o'clock, he thought he beheld a light glimmering at a great distance. Fearing his eager hopes might deceive him, he called to Pedro Gutierrez, gentleman of the king's bedchamber, and inquired whether he saw such a light, the latter replied in the affirmative. Doubtful whether it might not yet be some delusion of the fancy, Columbus  
 10 called Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, and made the same inquiry. By the time the latter had ascended the roundhouse, the light had disappeared. They saw it once or twice afterwards in sudden and passing gleams, as if it were a torch in the bark of a fisherman, rising and sinking with the waves, or in the hand of some person on shore, borne up and down as he walked from house to house. So transient  
 20 and uncertain were these gleams, that few attached any importance to them, Columbus, however, considered them as certain signs of land, and moreover, that the land was inhabited.

They continued their course until two in the morning, when a gun from the *Pinia* gave the joyful signal of land. It was first descried by a mariner named Rodrigo de Triana, but the reward was afterwards adjudged to the admiral, for having previously perceived the  
 30 light. The land was now clearly seen about two leagues distant, whereupon they took in sail, and laid to, waiting impatiently for the dawn.

The thoughts and feelings of Columbus in this little space of time must have been tumultuous and intense. At length in spite of every difficulty and danger, he had accomplished his object. The great mystery of the ocean was revealed, his theory, which had  
 40 been the scoff of sages, was triumphantly established, he had secured to himself a glory durable as the world itself.

It is difficult to conceive the feelings of such a man, at such a moment, or the conjectures which must have thronged upon his mind, as to the land before him, covered with darkness. That it was fruitful, was evident from the vegetables which floated from its shores. He thought, too, that he perceived the fragrance  
 50 of aromatic groves. The moving light he had

beheld proved it the residence of man. But what were its inhabitants? Were they like those of the other parts of the globe, or were they some strange and monstrous race, such as the imagination was prone in those times to give to all remote and unknown regions? Had he come upon some wild island far in the Indian sea, or was this the famed Cipango  
 itself, the object of his golden fancies? A thousand speculations of the kind must have swarmed upon him, as, with his anxious  
 crews, he waited for the night to pass away; wondering whether the morning light would reveal a savage wilderness, or dawn upon spicy groves, and glittering fanes, and gilded cities, and all the splendor of oriental civilization.

1818

## From A TOUR ON THE PRAIRIES

### CHAPTER VII

#### *The Osage Village*

In 1832 Irving traveled on horseback through the southwestern territories beyond the Mississippi, as a part of an extended visit to different sections of the United States after his long absence in Europe. *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835) is not  
 lacking in interest, but reveals the author as essentially an urban and cultivated spirit to whom the Arkansas forest suggests the interior of a  
 Gothic cathedral and who observes eccentric personalities, red and white, rather than as one who attempts an interpretation of the new country.

In the morning early (Oct. 12), the two Creeks who had been sent express by the commander of Fort Gibson to stop the company of rangers, arrived at our encampment on their return. They had left the company encamped about fifty miles distant, in a fine place on the Arkansas, abounding in game, where they intended to await our arrival. This news spread animation throughout our party, and we set out on our march at sunrise with renewed spirit.

In mounting our steeds, the young Osage attempted to throw a blanket upon his wild horse. The fine, sensitive animal took fright, reared, and recoiled. The attitudes of the wild horse and the almost naked savage would have formed studies for a painter or a statuary

I often pleased myself in the course of our march with noticing the appearance of the young Count and his newly enlisted follower as they rode before me. Never was *preux chevalier* better suited with an esquire. The Count was well mounted, and as I have before observed, was a bold and graceful rider. He was fond, too, of caracoling his horse and dashing about in the buoyancy of youthful spirits. His dress was a gay Indian hunting-frock of dressed deerskin, setting well to the shape, dyed of a beautiful purple, and fancifully embroidered with silks of various colors; as if it had been the work of some Indian beauty, to decorate a favorite chief. With this he wore leathern pantaloons and moccasins, a foraging-cap, and a double-barrelled gun slung by a bandolier athwart his back, so that he was quite a picturesque figure as he managed gracefully his spirited steed.

The young Osage would ride close behind him on his wild and beautifully mottled horse, which was decorated with crimson tufts of hair. He rode with his finely shaped head and bust naked, his blanket being girt round his waist. He carried his rifle in one hand and managed his horse with the other, and seemed ready to dash off at a moment's warning with his youthful leader, on any madcap foray or scamper. The Count, with the sanguine anticipations of youth, promised himself many hardy adventures and exploits in company with his youthful "brave" when we should get among the buffaloes, in the Pawnee hunting-grounds.

After riding some distance, we crossed a narrow, deep stream upon a solid bridge, the remains of an old beaver dam, the industrious community which had constructed it had all been destroyed. Above us, a streaming flight of wild geese, high in air and making a vociferous noise, gave note of the waning year.

About half-past ten o'clock we made a halt in a forest, where there was abundance of the pea-vine. Here we turned the horses loose to graze. A fire was made, water procured from an adjacent spring, and in a short time our little Frenchman, Tonish, had a pot of coffee prepared for our refreshment. While partaking of it, we were joined by an old Osage, one of a small hunting party who had recently

passed this way. He was in search of his horse, which had wandered away or been stolen. Our half-breed, Beattie, made a wry face on hearing of Osage hunters in this direction. "Until we pass those hunters," said he, "we shall see no buffaloes. They frighten away everything like a prairie on fire."

The morning repast being over, the party amused themselves in various ways. Some shot with their rifles at a mark, others lay asleep, half buried in the deep bed of foliage, with their heads resting on their saddles, others gossiped round the fire at the foot of a tree, which sent up wreaths of blue smoke among the branches. The horses banqueted luxuriously on the pea-vines, and some lay down and rolled amongst them.

We were overshadowed by lofty trees, with straight, smooth trunks like stately columns, and as the glancing rays of the sun shone through the transparent leaves, tinted with the many-colored hues of autumn, I was reminded of the effect of sunlight among the stained windows and clustering columns of a Gothic cathedral. Indeed, there is a grandeur and solemnity in our spacious forests of the West that awaken in me the same feeling I have experienced in those vast and venerable piles, and the sound of the wind sweeping through them supplies occasionally the deep breathings of the organ.

About noon the bugle sounded to horse, and we were again on the march, hoping to arrive at the encampment of the rangers before night, as the old Osage had assured us it was not above ten or twelve miles distant. In our course through a forest, we passed by a lonely pool, covered with the most magnificent water-lilies I had ever beheld, among which swam several wood-ducks, one of the most beautiful of water-fowl, remarkable for the gracefulness and brilliancy of its plumage.

After proceeding some distance farther, we came down upon the banks of the Arkansas, at a place where tracks of numerous horses, all entering the water, showed where a party of Osage hunters had recently crossed the river on their way to the buffalo range. After letting our horses drink in the river, we continued along its bank for a space, and then across prairies, where we saw a distant smoke,

which we hoped might proceed from the encampment of the rangers. Following what we supposed to be their trail, we came to a meadow in which were a number of horses grazing, they were not, however, the horses of the troop. A little farther on, we reached a straggling Osage village on the banks of the Arkansas. Our arrival created quite a sensation. A number of old men came forward and shook hands with us all severally, while the women and children huddled together in groups, staring at us wildly, chattering and laughing among themselves. We found that all the young men of the village had departed on a hunting expedition, leaving the women and children and old men behind. Here the Commissioner made a speech from on horseback, informing his hearers of the purport of his mission, to promote a general peace among the tribes of the West, and urging them to lay aside all warlike and blood-thirsty notions, and not to make any wanton attacks upon the Pawnees. This speech, being interpreted by Beatte, seemed to have a most pacifying effect upon the multitude, who promised faithfully that, as far as in them lay, the peace should not be disturbed, and indeed their age and sex gave some reason to trust that they would keep their word.

Still hoping to reach the camp of the rangers before nightfall, we pushed on until twilight, when we were obliged to halt on the borders of a ravine. The rangers bivouacked under trees, at the bottom of the dell, while we pitched our tent on a rocky knoll near a running stream. The night came on dark and overcast, with flying clouds and much appearance of rain. The fires of the rangers burnt brightly in the dell, and threw strong masses of light upon the robber-looking groups that were cooking, eating, and drinking around them. To add to the wildness of the scene, several Osage Indians, visitors from the village we had passed, were mingled among the men. Three of them came and seated themselves by our fire. They watched everything that was going on round them in silence, and looked like figures of monumental bronze. We gave them food, and, what they most relished, coffee, for the Indians partake

in the universal fondness for this beverage, which pervades the West. When they had made their supper, they stretched themselves side by side before the fire and began a low nasal chant, drumming with their hands upon their breasts by way of accompaniment. Their chant seemed to consist of regular staves, every one terminating, not in a melodious cadence, but in the abrupt interjection *Huhl* uttered almost like a hiccup. This chant, we were told by our interpreter, Beatte, related to ourselves, our appearance, our treatment of them, and all that they knew of our plans. In one part they spoke of the young Count, whose animated character and eagerness for Indian enterprise had struck their fancy, and they indulged in some waggy about him and the young Indian beauties that produced great merriment among our half-breeds.

This mode of improvising is common throughout the savage tribes, and in this way, with a few simple inflections of the voice, they chant all their exploit in war and hunting, and occasionally indulge in a vein of comic humor and dry satire, to which the Indians appear to me much more prone than is generally imagined.

In fact, the Indians that I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are quite different from those described in poetry. They are by no means the stoics that they are represented, taciturn, unbending, without a tear or a smile. Taciturn they are, it is true, when in company with white men, whose good-will they distrust, and whose language they do not understand, but the white man is equally taciturn under like circumstances. When the Indians are among themselves, however, there cannot be greater gossips. Half their time is taken up in talking over their adventures in war and hunting, and in telling whimsical stories. They are great mimics and buffoons also, and entertain themselves excessively at the expense of the whites with whom they have associated, and who have supposed them impressed with profound respect for their grandeur and dignity. They are curious observers, noting everything in silence, but with a keen and watchful eye, occasionally exchanging a glance or a grunt with each other when anything particularly strikes them, but re-

serving all comments until they are alone. Then it is that they give full scope to criticism, satire, mimicry, and mirth.

In the course of my journey along the frontier I have had repeated opportunities of noticing their excitability and boisterous merriment at their games, and have occasionally noticed a group of Osages sitting round a fire until a late hour of the night, engaged in the most animated and lively conversation, and at times making the woods resound with peals of laughter. As to tears, they have them in abundance, both real and affected, at times they make a merit of them. No one weeps more bitterly or profusely at the death of a relative or friend, and they have stated times when they repair to howl and lament at their graves. I have heard doleful wailings at day-break, in the neighboring Indian villages, made by some of the inhabitants, who go out at that hour into the fields to mourn and weep for the dead. At such times, I am told, the tears will stream down their cheeks in torrents.

As far as I can judge, the Indian of poetical fiction is, like the shepherd of pastoral romance, a mere personification of imaginary attributes.

The nasal chant of our Osage guests gradually died away, they covered their heads with their blankets and fell fast asleep, and in a little while all was silent excepting the pattering of scattered rain-drops upon our tent.

In the morning our Indian visitors breakfasted with us, but the young Osage who was to act as esquire to the Count in his knight-errantry on the prairies was nowhere to be

found. His wild horse, too, was missing, and after many conjectures we came to the conclusion that he had taken "Indian leave" of us in the night. We afterwards ascertained that he had been persuaded so to do by the Osages we had recently met with, who had represented to him the perils that would attend him in an expedition to the Pawnee hunting-grounds, where he might fall into the hands of the implacable enemies of his tribe, and what was scarcely less to be apprehended, the annoyances to which he would be subjected from the capricious and overbearing conduct of the white men, who, as I have witnessed in my own short experience, are prone to treat the poor Indians as little better than brute animals. Indeed, he had had a specimen of it himself in the narrow escape he made from the infliction of "Lynch's law" by the hard-winking worthy of the frontier, for the flagitious crime of finding a stray horse.

The disappearance of the youth was generally regretted by our party, for we had all taken a great fancy to him from his handsome, frank, and manly appearance and the easy grace of his deportment. He was indeed a native-born gentleman. By none, however, was he so much lamented as by the young Count, who thus suddenly found himself deprived of his esquire. I regretted the departure of the Osage for his own sake, for we should have cherished him throughout the expedition, and I am convinced, from the munificent spirit of his patron, he would have returned to his tribe laden with wealth of beads and trinkets and Indian blankets.

1835

## 1794 -- William Cullen Bryant -- 1878

**B**RYANT is usually placed, for reasons of convenience, with his contemporaries Irving and Cooper in the New York group of writers (1815-1837), though he was essentially a product of New England environment and influences, and his best work as a poet was done before his removal to New York in 1825. His first thirty years, except a few months, were spent in the beautiful wooded Berkshire Hills region of western Massachusetts, where he was born on a farm in Cum-

mmington. At first a frail child, his precocious mind developed in an atmosphere of Calvinism and Federalism, modified by his own romantic devotion to the beauties of nature in his neighborhood. His father, Dr. Peter Bryant, physician of the town, a man of great physical and intellectual vigor, taught him to recognize the plants and herbs of the vicinity and their qualities, and encouraged his growing love of poetry. From the age of nine he wrote verses, first in the couplets of Pope, including *The Embargo, or a Sketch of the Times*, an ill-natured satire on Jefferson, which his proud father caused to be published in Boston in 1808. Later came acquaintance with the poetry of Thomson, Burns, Cowper, and the mid-eighteenth-century "graveyard poets."

After finishing at the Cummington school in 1808, he studied Latin and New Testament Greek with clergymen at North Brookfield and Plainfield, and entered the sophomore class at Williams College in 1811. His year there served chiefly to relax his Calvinism through acquaintance with the Greek poets and with French deistic views held by some of the students. Both influences are evident in his first draft of "Thanatopsis," written in the fall of 1811. Disappointed in his hope of transferring to Yale, Bryant spent the next four years in study in lawyers' offices in Worthington and Bridgewater, where he was admitted to the bar in August, 1815. Still a Federalist and opposed to the War of 1812, he volunteered for service in the militia, in expectation of being called upon to defend Massachusetts if she should secede from the Union. After a year in Plainfield, near home, he settled in Great Barrington for nine years' law practice, pursued successfully but with increasing distaste for the profession.

Recognition as a poet came in 1817, when his father gave to the editors of the new *North American Review* the manuscripts of "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl." After some incredulosity that so fine a poem as the former could be the work of an American, they printed it in the September issue. "To a Waterfowl" appeared in the *Review* in April, 1818, and the essay "Early American Poetry," decrying imitativeness and feebleness in American verse writers, in July. Further recognition came in the invitation to read the Phi Beta Kappa poem—"The Ages"—at Harvard in 1821. This was also the year of his first serious volume of verse, *Poems*, and of his marriage to Frances Fairchild, "fairest of the rural maids." His most creative period as a poet was 1824-1825, when he was actively writing for the *United States Literary Gazette*, of Boston. He had long desired to settle in that city, but in 1825, through the influence of the Sedgwick family, he accepted the co-editorship of the *New York Review* and of the reorganized *United States Review and Literary Gazette*, at New York. Two years later he became assistant editor of the *New York Evening Post* and in 1829 its editor, continuing, with a share in its ownership, for nearly fifty years. He had long since discarded Federalism for a democratic liberalism, and Calvinism for a conservative type of Unitarianism. Un-



der his hand the *Evening Post* became one of the best and most influential of American newspapers. In its pages he advocated freedom of speech, free trade, the right of collective bargaining in labor, and the liberation of subject peoples abroad and of the slaves at home. The *Post* supported the Democratic administrations from Jackson to Pierce. When slavery became a paramount issue, Bryant joined the newly organized Republican party in 1855, helped to elect Lincoln, assailed the Southern seceders as traitors, and urged vigorous prosecution of the war. Later he retained his Republican affiliation, despite his objection to harsh reconstruction measures, the corruptness of the Grant administration, and his personal sympathy for Samuel J. Tilden.

In the editor, the poet was soon submerged, though Bryant retained his loyalty to verse, lectured on poets and poetry, and enjoyed an undimmed reputation as the first American to win achievement in that field. In his own output there was neither advance nor decline in quality. Occasionally, as in "The Prairies" (1832), celebrating his first trip to the West, "The Battlefield" (1842), and "The Death of Lincoln" (1865), he equalled his better earlier performances. His last long poem, "The Flood of Years," written in 1878, is the same kind of sober survey in noble blank verse as "The Ages," written in 1821.

After 1832 he traveled extensively in America and abroad, somewhat enlarging the geographical scope of his poetry. Following the death of his wife in 1866, he turned seriously to a project, begun by 1863, of translating the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into English blank verse. The two works, published in 1870 and 1872, respectively, are sometimes regarded as the most successful English versions of the Homeric epics. Though a wealthy man in his later life, he lived simply and retained his physical vigor beyond his eightieth year. His death on June 12, 1878, was hastened by exposure to the sun while delivering an address on the Italian patriot, Mazzini, in Central Park, New York.

Bryant's chief literary distinction is as a poet of unusual dignity and evenness in versification, and nobility and eloquence in language, dealing with a few elemental themes such as the beauty and harmony of nature, the sacredness of human freedom, the flow and ebb of human existence, and the power and beneficence of God. His realm is somewhat narrow, but he is supreme in it. As the first poet of his nation to earn distinction, his direct influence upon younger writers was naturally strong. Such early blank verse poems as Longfellow's "The Spirit of Poetry," Emerson's "The River," and Whittier's "The Past and Coming Year" attest this influence, sometimes needlessly attributed to Wordsworth. More important than any specific influence, however, is perhaps the general effect of his mastery of a wide range of metrical forms and the uniform high level of his technical excellence upon American versifiers, in a time of romantic stress upon inspired ideas rather than care for form.

Much of the course of development of English poetry is reflected in Bryant's career. Starting under the influence of Pope and the Augustans, he passed through that of the pre-romantics, Thomson, Cowper, Blair, and Kirke White, then emulated Byron and later felt the maturing influence of the kindred spirit of the Wordsworth of "Tintern Abbey" and the "Lucy" poems. In his most productive period, the middle 1820's, he was a versatile and almost exuberant romanticist; even exploring, like Irving, the realms of the German school of terror in such poems as "The Murdered Traveler." After 1835 he passed on to the more subdued romanticism of the Victorians, producing mostly serious, reflective, and generalizing poems like the noble "The Antiquity of Freedom," "The Death of Lincoln," and "The Poet." First and last, Bryant published a considerable amount of literary criticism, including his early essay "On the Use of Trisyllabic Feet in Iambic Verse" (1811), his review, "Early American Verse" (1818), his four "Lectures on Poetry" (1825), and editorial utterances in the *United States Literary Gazette*, the *Evening Post*, and his collections, *Selections from the American Poets* (1840), and *A Library of Poetry and Song* (1870). In all of these, the romantic theory is presented. He believed in originality rather than imitation. He maintained, in his "Lectures on Poetry," that the imagination—the "restless faculty . . . which is ever wandering from the combination of ideas directly presented to it to other combinations of its own"—and the emotions are the primary concerns of the literary artist. "There is no question that one powerful office of poetry is to excite the emotions . . . , another of its ends is to touch the heart. . . . The most beautiful poetry is that which takes the strongest hold of the feelings." Genuine emotion, he felt, "instinctively chooses the most effectual means of communicating itself." In a broad sense also, he believed with his fellow New Englanders and the English Victorians that poetry should have a humanizing moral purpose.

"It is the dominion of poetry over the feelings and passions of men that gives it its most important bearing upon the virtue and the welfare of society. . . . Does it not glory in sentiments of fortitude and magnanimity, the fountain of disinterested sacrifice?"

Genuine romanticist though he was in feeling, however, Bryant had a large share of the true classicist's appreciation of the value of restraint, dignity, and perfection of utterance.

Between 1827 and 1832, under the general influence of Irving's successes, Bryant tried his hand at a number of narrative sketches, but wisely decided to abandon this field, for which his imagination was not adapted. His other prose, largely in the form of editorials, critical essays, and travel sketches, shows the same sterling qualities of clearness, dignity, directness, and careful diction which distinguished his verse.

*The Poetical Works of William Cullen Bryant* (1876), supervised by Bryant, is the best edition of the poems included. *The Poetical Works of William Cullen Bryant* (2 vols., 1882, issued as vols. 3-4 of the *Life and Writings*) contains numerous other poems, with helpful notes by Parke Godwin. The Roslyn Edition of the *Poetical Works* (1903) is the best one-volume edition. It contains a memoir by R. H. Stoddard and the bibliography of H. C. Sturges (see below). The *Prose Writings of William Cullen Bryant* (2 vols., 1884, issued as vols. 5-6 of the *Life and Writings*) comprises essays, tales, addresses, editorials, travel sketches, and literary criticisms, edited by Parke Godwin. *William Cullen Bryant Representative Selections*, by Tremaine McDowell (1935), contains—besides an excellent interpretative introduction, notes, and a bibliography brought up to date—a number of uncollected and unpublished poems and prose pieces.

Parke Godwin's *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant, with Extracts from his Private Correspondence* (1883), published as vols. 1 and 2 of the *Life and Writings*, is the standard biography. John Bigelow's *William Cullen Bryant, American Men of Letters Series* (1890), is based on personal association with Bryant as editor and man of affairs. See also W. A. Bradley, *William Cullen Bryant, English Men of Letters Series* (1905), G. W. Curtis, *The Life, Character, and Writings of William Cullen Bryant* (1879), Rita Brenner, *Twelve American Poets before 1900* (1933), 23-47, C. I. Glicksberg, "Bryant and the *United States Review*," *New England Quarterly*, VII, 687-701 (Dec., 1934), "Bryant and the Sedgwick Family," *Americana*, XXXI, 626-638 (Oct., 1937), and "William Cullen Bryant and Fanny Wright," *American Literature*, VI, 427-432 (Jan., 1935), and a notable series of articles on Bryant's early life by Tremaine McDowell: "The Ancestry of William Cullen Bryant," *Americana*, XXII, 408-20 (Oct., 1928), "Cullen Bryant Prepares for College," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXX, 125-33 (April, 1931), "Cullen Bryant at Williams College," *New England Quarterly*, I, 443-66 (Oct., 1928), "William Cullen Bryant and Yale," *New England Quarterly*, III, 706-16 (Oct., 1930), "Bryant and the *North American Review*," *American Literature*, I, 14-26 (March, 1929), and "Edgar Allan Poe and William Cullen Bryant," *Philological Quarterly*, XVI, 83-4 (Jan., 1937).

Particularly useful general or specialized criticisms are Tremaine McDowell, introduction to *Bryant, American Writers Series* (1935), xiii-lxviii, a comprehensive treatment of the chief aspects of Bryant's work, and "Bryant's Practice in Composition and Revision," *PMLA*, LII, 474-502 (June, 1937), C. I. Glicksberg, "William Cullen Bryant, a Reinterpretation," *Revue Anglo-Américaine*, XI, 495-504 (Aug., 1934), G. W. Allen, *American Prosody* (1935), 27-55, on Bryant's verse, W. B. Cairns, *British Criticisms of American Writings, 1815-1833* (1922), 158-64 and *passim*, for contemporary criticism, Norman Foerster, *Nature in American Literature* (1923), 1-19, an excellent discussion of this subject, Allen Nevins, *The Evening Post A Century of Journalism* (1922), indispensable for Bryant as an editor, and V. L. Parrington, *The Romantic Revolution in American Literature* (1927), 238-46, Bryant as a social and political liberal. See also contemporary judgments by Poe in the *Southern Literary Messenger* (Jan., 1837), *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* (May, 1840), and *Godey's Lady's Book* (April, 1846), John Neal in *Blackwood's* (Sept., 1824), John Wilson in *Blackwood's* (April, 1832), the attacks by Harriet Monroe in *Poetry*, VI, 197-200 (July, 1915) and *Dial*, LIX, 314-15 and 479-80 (Oct. 14 and Nov. 25, 1915), and defense by J. L. Hervey, *Dial*, LIX, 92-3, 361-3, and 555-7 (Aug. 15, Oct. 28, and Dec. 9, 1915), studies of "Thanatopsis" by Carl Van Doren in the *Nation*, CI, 432-3 (Oct. 7, 1915) and by W. F. Johnson, *North American Review*, CCXXIV, 556-72 (Nov., 1927), the *CHAL* article on Bryant by W. E. Leonard, I, 260-78, E. S. Nadal, "William Cullen Bryant," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XXXVIII, 369-75 (Sept., 1878), E. C. Stedman, *Poets of America* (1885), 62-94, M. T. Herrick, "Rhetoric and Poetry in Bryant," *American Literature*, VII, 188-94 (May, 1935),

G. P. Voigt, *The Religious and Ethical Element in the Major American Poets* (1925), 13-27, an analysis of Bryant's religion, and W. C. Wilkinson, *A Free Lance in the Field of Life and Letters* (1874), 184-254, Bryant as translator and classicist

### From THE EMBARGO

#### OR SKETCHES OF THE TIMES

Bryant's boyhood satire on Jefferson, the sentiments of which he later disclaimed, gives evidence of his early mastery of the heroic couplet, of the inherited Federalist political views he held at that time, and the intolerant character of the anti-Jeffersonian campaigns

BUT quit thy meaner game, indignant Muse,  
And to thy country turn thy nobler views,  
Ill-fated elme, condemned to feel th' extremes  
Of a weak ruler's philosophic dreams,  
Driven headlong on to rum's fateful brink,  
When will thy country feel—when will she  
thunk!

Satire Muse, shall injured Commerce weep  
Her ravished rights, and will thy thunders  
sleep,

Dart thy keen glances, knit thy thircl'ning  
brows,

Call fire from heaven to blast thy country's  
foes 10

Oh! let a youth thine inspiration learn—  
Oh! give him, "words that breathe and  
thoughts that burn"

E'en while I sing, see Faction urge her claim,  
Mislead with falsehood, and with zeal inflame,  
Lift her black banner, spread her empire wide,  
And stalk triumphant with a Fury's stride  
She blows her brazen trumpet, and at the sound,  
A motley throng, obedient, flock around,  
A mist of changing hue o'er all she flings,  
And darkness perches on her dragon wings! 20

As Johnson deep, as Addison refined,  
And skill'd to pour conviction o'er the mind,  
Oh might some patriot rise! the gloom dispel,  
Chase Error's mist, and break her magic spell!

But vain the wish, for hark! the murmuring  
need

Of hoarse applause from yonder shed proceed,  
Enter and view the thronging concourse there,  
Intent, with gaping mouth and stupid stare,  
While in their midst, their supple leader stands,  
Harangues aloud, and flourishes his hands, 30  
To adulation turns his servile throat,  
And sues, successful, for each blockhead's  
vote.

And thou, the scorn of every patriot name,  
Thy country's ruin and thy council's shame!  
Poor servile thing! dension of the brave!  
Who erst from Tarleton fled to Carter's cave,  
Thou, who, when menaced by perfidious  
Gaul,

Didst prostrate to her whisker'd minion fall,  
And when our cash her empty bags supplied,  
Didst meanly serve the foul disgrace to hide,  
Go, wretch, resign the presidential chair, 41  
Disclose thy secret measures, foul or fair  
Go, search with curious eyes for horned frogs,  
Mid the wild wastes of Louisianian bogs,  
Or, where the Ohio rolls his turbid stream,  
Dig for huge bones, thy glory and thy theme  
Go, scan, Philosopher, thy Sally's charms,  
And sink supinely in her sable arms,  
But quit to abler hands the helm of state

1808

### THANATOPSIS

The first column of pp 532 and 533 contains the original version of "Thanatopsis" as it appeared in the *North American Review*, September 1817. The four quatrains with which the original version begins obviously deal with the same theme as the ensuing blank verse, but may not have been intended to go with it. See Carl Van Doren, "The Growth of Thanatopsis," *Nation*, CI, 432-433 (Oct. 7, 1915).

### THANATOPSIS

The revised version of "Thanatopsis," as it appeared in Bryant's *Poems* (1821), is printed in this second column. Whereas the original version was a subjective poem, Bryant's added introduction in the revision puts the discussion of death in the mouth of Nature. Aside from a remote suggestion of immortality in lines 77-78 of the new conclusion, the poem still contains no essential elements of Christianity.

Not that from life, and all its woes  
The hand of death shall set me free,  
Not that this head, shall then repose  
In the low vale most peacefully

Ah, when I touch time's farthest brink,  
A kinder solace must attend,  
It chills my very soul, to think  
On that dread hour when life must end.

In vain the flatt'ring verse may breathe,  
Of ease from pain, and rest from strife, 10  
There is a sacred dread of death  
Inwoven with the strings of life

This bitter cup at first was given  
When angry *justice* frown'd severe,  
And 'us th' eternal doom of heaven  
That man must view the grave with fear

———Yet a few days, and thee,  
The all-beholding sun, shall see no more,  
In all his course, nor yet in the cold ground,  
Where thy pale form was laid, with many 20  
tears,

Nor in th' embrace of ocean shall exist  
Thy image Earth, that nourished thee, shall  
claim

Thy growth, to be resolv'd to earth again,  
And, lost each human trace, surrend'ring up  
Thine individual being, shalt thou go  
To mix forever with the elements,  
To be a brother to th' insensible rock  
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude  
swain

Turns with his share, and treads upon The  
oak  
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy  
mould 30

Yet not to thy eternal resting place  
Shalt thou retire alone—nor couldst thou wish  
Couch more magnificent Thou shalt lie down  
With patriarchs of the infant world—with  
kings

The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,  
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,  
All in one mighty sepulchre.—The hills,  
Rock-ribb'd and ancient as the sun,—the vales  
Stretching in pensive quietness between,  
The venerable woods—the floods that move

To him who in the love of Nature holds  
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
A various language, for his gayer hours  
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile  
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides  
Into his darker musings, with a mild  
And healing sympathy, that steals away  
Their sharpness, ere he is aware When  
thoughts

Of the last bitter hour come like a blight  
Over thy spirit, and sad images 10  
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,  
And breathless darkness, and the narrow  
house,

Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at  
heart,—  
Go forth, under the open sky, and list  
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—  
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—  
Comes a still voice—

Yet a few days, and thee  
The all-beholding sun shall see no more  
In all his course, nor yet in the cold ground,  
Where thy pale form was laid, with many 20  
tears,

Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist  
Thy image Earth, that nourished thee, shall  
claim

Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,  
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up  
Thine individual being, shalt thou go  
To mix forever with the elements,  
To be a brother to the insensible rock  
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude  
swain

Turns with his share, and treads upon The  
oak  
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy  
mould 30

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place  
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish  
Couch more magnificent Thou shalt lie down  
With patriarchs of the infant world, with  
kings,

The powerful of the earth, the wise, the good,  
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,  
All in one mighty sepulchre The hills  
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun, the vales  
Stretching in pensive quietness between,  
The venerable woods, rivers that move 40

In majesty,—and the complaining brooks, 41  
That wind among the meads, and make them  
green,

Are but the solemn decorations all,  
Of the great tomb of man—The golden  
sun,

The planets, all the infinite host of heaven  
Are glowing on the sad abodes of death,  
Through the still lapse of ages All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes

That slumber in its bosom—Take the  
wings 49

Of morning—and the Borean desert<sup>1</sup> pierce—  
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods

That veil Oregon,<sup>2</sup> where he hears no sound  
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are  
there,

And millions in those solitudes, since first  
The flight of years began, have laid them down  
In their last sleep—the dead reign there  
alone —

So shalt thou rest—and what if thou shalt fall  
Unnoticed by the living—and no friend 58

Take note of thy departure<sup>3</sup> Thousands more  
Will share thy destiny —The tittering world  
Dance to the grave The busy brood of care  
Plod on, and each one chases as before  
His favourite phantom —Yet all these shall  
leave

Their mirth and their employments, and shall  
come

And make their bed with thee!———<sup>3</sup>

1812

1817

<sup>1</sup> the Arctic wastes <sup>2</sup> really the Columbia apparently pronounced like O'Regan by the boy poet

<sup>3</sup> Note that the poem was first written to suggest a fragment, a favorite early device in Bryant's poetry See footnote to the conclusion of "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood," below, p. 535

In majesty, and the complaining brooks  
That make the meadows green, and, poured  
round all,

Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—  
Are but the solemn decorations all  
Of the great tomb of man The golden sun,

The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,  
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,  
Through the still lapse of ages All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes

That slumber in its bosom—Take the  
wings 50

Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,  
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods

Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,  
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are  
there.

And millions in those solitudes, since first  
The flight of years began, have laid them down  
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone  
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw  
In silence from the living, and no friend 59

Take note of thy departure<sup>3</sup> All that breathe  
Will share thy destiny The gay will laugh  
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care  
Plod on, and each one as before will chase  
His favorite phantom, yet all these shall leave  
Their mirth and their employments, and shall  
come

And make their bed with thee As the long train  
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,  
The youth in life's green spring, and he who  
goes

In the full strength of years, matron and maid,  
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed  
man— 70

Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,  
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to  
join

The innumerable caravan, which moves  
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and  
soothed 78

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

1812, 1821

1821

## THE YELLOW VIOLET

"The Yellow Violet" is one of the best examples in Bryant's early work of the attempt to mix neo-classical didacticism and formal circumlocutions—"the genial hour" and "painted tribes of light"—with real and appreciative description of the flowers and woods of Cummington

WHEN beechen buds begin to swell,  
And woods the bluebird's warble know,  
The yellow violet's modest bell  
Peeps from the last year's leaves below

Ere russet fields their green resume,  
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,  
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume  
Alone is in the virgin air

Of all her train, the hands of Spring  
First plant thee in the watery mold, 10  
And I have seen thee blossoming  
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view  
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,  
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,  
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip

Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,  
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,  
Unapt the passing view to meet,  
When loftier flowers are flaunting high 20

Oft, in the sunless April day,  
Thy early smile has stayed my walk,  
But midst the gorgeous blooms of May,  
I passed thee on thy humble stalk

So they who climb to wealth forget  
The friends in darker fortunes tried  
I copied them—but I regret  
That I should ape the ways of pride

And when again the genial hour  
Awakes the painted tribes of light, 30  
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower  
That made the woods of April bright

1814

## TO A WATERFOWL

Written at the end of a December day at Plainfield While walking thither in a disconsolate frame of mind to inquire about prospects of practising law there, he saw the flight of the solitary bird against "one of those brilliant seas of chrysolite and opal which often flood the New England skies" (Godwin, *Biography*, I, 143-144) The student, in seeking an answer to the question why Matthew Arnold should have considered this the finest short poem in the English language, would do well to examine the means by which Bryant secures the effect of great space in his picture

WHITHER, midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps of  
day,  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou  
pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee  
wrong,  
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
Of woody lake, or margin of river wide, 10  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—  
The desert and illimitable air—  
Lone wandering, but not lost

All day thy wings have fanned,  
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near 20

And soon that toil shall end,  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,  
And scream among thy fellows, reeds shall  
bend,  
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven  
Hath swallowed up thy form, yet, on my heart  
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,  
And shall not soon depart.

1821

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain  
flight, 30  
In the long way that I must tread alone  
Will lead my steps aright.

1815

1818

INSCRIPTION FOR THE EN-  
TRANCE TO A WOOD

STRANGER, if thou hast learned a truth which  
needs

No school of long experience, that the world  
Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen  
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cures,  
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood  
And view the haunts of Nature The calm  
shade

Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet  
breeze,

That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft  
a balm

To thy sick heart.<sup>1</sup> Thou wilt find nothing  
here

Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men 10  
And made thee loathe thy life The primal  
curse<sup>2</sup>

Fell, it is true, upon the unsinning earth,  
But not in vengeance God hath yoked to  
guilt

Her pale tormentor, misery Hence, these  
shades

Are still the abodes of gladness, the thick roof  
Of green and stirring branches is alive

And musical with birds, that sing and sport  
In wantonness of spirit, while, below,

The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,  
Chirps merrily Throngs of insects in the  
shade 20

Try their thin wings and dance in the warm  
beam

That waked them into life Even the green  
trees

Partake the deep contentment, as they bend

<sup>1</sup> Compare with lines 6-11 the passage in Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," lines 22-31. <sup>2</sup> Bryant said that as a young man he still supposed Calvinism "to be the accepted belief of the religious world." See Tremaine McDowell, "The Juvenile Verse of William Cullen Bryant," *Studies in Philology*, XXVI, 99-101.

To the soft winds, the sun from the blue  
sky

Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene  
Scarce less the elf-born wild-flower seems to  
enjoy

Existence, than the winged plunderer  
That sucks its sweets. The mossy rocks them-  
selves,

And the old and ponderous trunks of pros-  
trate trees

That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude 30  
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark  
roots,

With all their earth upon them, twisting high,  
Breathe fixed tranquillity. The rivulet  
Sends forth glad sounds, and, tripping o'er its  
bed

Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,  
Seems with continuous laughter to rejoice  
In its own being Softly tread the marge,  
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the  
wren

That dips her bill in water<sup>1</sup> The cool wind,  
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to  
thee, 40

Like one that loves thee nor will let thee  
pass

Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace  
1815 1817

I CANNOT FORGET WITH WHAT  
FERVID DEVOTION

I CANNOT forget with what fervid devotion  
I worshiped the visions of verse and of  
fame,

Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and  
ocean,

To my kindled emotions, was wind over  
flame

And deep were my musings in life's early  
blossom,

'Mid the twilight of mountain groves wan-  
dering along,

How thrilled my young veins, and how  
throbbed my full bosom,

When o'er me descended the spirit of song!

<sup>1</sup> The earliest published version of the poem ended at this point.



'Mong the deep-cloven fells that for ages had  
listened

To the rush of the pebble-paved river be-  
tween, 10

Where the kingfisher screamed and gray preci-  
pice glistened,

All breathless with awe have I gazed on the  
scene,

Till I felt the dark power o'er my reveries  
stealing,

From the gloom of the thicket that over me  
hung,

And the thoughts that awoke, in that rapture  
of feeling,

Were formed into verse as they rose to my  
tongue

Bright visions! I mixed with the world, and ye  
faded,

No longer your pure rural worshiper now;  
In the haunts your continual presence per-  
vaded,

Ye shrink from the signet of care on my  
brow 20

In the old mossy groves on the breast of the  
mountains,

In deep lonely glens where the waters com-  
plain,

By the shade of the rock, by the gush of the  
fountain,

I seek your loved footsteps, but seek them  
in vain.

Oh, leave not forlorn and forever forsaken,  
Your pupil and victim to life and its tears!

But sometimes return, and in mercy awaken  
The glories ye showed to us earlier years

1815

1826

## GREEN RIVER

WHEN breezes are soft and skies are fair,  
I steal an hour from study and care,  
And lure me away to the woodland scene,  
Where wanders the stream with waters of  
green,

As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink  
Had given their stain to the wave they drink,  
And they, whose meadows it murmurs  
through,

Have named the stream from its own fair hue

Yet pure its waters—its shallows are bright  
With colored pebbles and sparkles of light, 10  
And clear the depths where its eddies play,  
And dimples deepen and whirl away,  
And the plane-tree's speckled arms o'er-  
shoot

The swifter current that mines its root,  
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk  
the hill,

The quivering glimmer of sun and rill  
With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,  
Like the ray that streams from the diamond-  
stone

Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,  
With blossoms, and birds, and wild-bees' 20  
hum,

The flowers of summer are fairest there,  
And freshest the breath of the summer air,  
And sweetest the golden autumn day  
In silence and sunshine glides away.

Yet, fair as thou art, thou shunnest to glide,  
Beautiful stream! by the village side,  
But windest away from haunts of men,  
To quiet valley and shaded glen,  
And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,  
Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still, 30  
Lonely—save when, by thy rippling udes,  
From thicket to thicket the angler glides,  
Or the simpler comes, with basket and book,  
For herbs of power on thy banks to seek,  
Or haply, some idle dreamer, like me,  
To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee,  
Still—save the chirp of birds that feed  
On the river cherry and sedgy reed,  
And thy own wild music gushing out  
With mellow murmur and fairy shout, 40  
From dawn to the blush of another day,  
Like traveler singing along his way

That fairy music I never hear,  
Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear,  
And mark them winding away from sight,  
Darkened with shade or flashing with light,  
While o'er them the vine to us thickly clings,  
And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings,  
But I wish that fate had left me free  
To wander these quiet haunts with thee, 50  
Till the eaning cares of earth should depart,  
And the peace of the scene pass into my  
heart,

And I envy thy stream, as it glides along  
Through its beautiful banks in a trance of  
song.

Though forced to drudge for the dregs of  
men,  
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous  
pen,  
And mingle among the jostling crowd,  
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud—  
I often come to this quiet place,  
To breathe the airs that ruffle thy face, 60  
And gaze upon thee in silent dream,  
For in thy lonely and lovely stream  
An image of that calm life appears  
That won my heart in my greener years.

1819

1821

### OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS

OH fairest of the rural maids!  
Thy birth was in the forest shades,  
Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,  
Were all that met thine infant eye

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,  
Were e'er in the sylvan wild,  
And all the beauty of the place  
Is in thy heart and on thy face

The twilight of the trees and rocks  
Is in the light shade of thy locks, 10  
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves  
Its playful way among the leaves

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene<sup>1</sup>  
And silent waters heaven is seen,  
Their lashes are the herbs that look  
On their young figures in the brook

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,  
Are not more sinless than thy breast,  
The holy peace, that fills the air  
Of those calm solitudes, is there 20

1820

1832

<sup>1</sup> Poe, who regarded this lyric the most highly among all Bryant's poems particularly praised the figure in lines 13-14, "for appropriateness, completeness, and every perfect beauty of which imagery is susceptible."

### A WINTER PIECE

THE time has been that these wild solitudes,  
Yet beautiful as wild, were trod by me  
Often than now, and when the ills of life  
Had chafed my spirit, when the unsteady pulse  
Beat with strange flutterings, I would wander  
forth

And seek the woods The sunshine on my  
path  
Was to me as a friend The swelling lulls,  
The quiet dells rearing far between  
With gentle invitation to explore  
Their windings, were a calm society 10  
That talked with me and soothed me Then the  
chant

Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress  
Of the fresh sylvan air, made me forget  
The thoughts that broke my peace, and I  
began

To gather simples by the fountain's brink,  
And lose myself in daydreams While I stood  
In Nature's loneliness, I was with one  
With whom I early grew familiar, one  
Who never had a frown for me, whose voice  
Never rebuked me for the hours I stole 20  
From cares I loved not, but of which the  
world

Deems higest, to converse with her When  
shrieked

The bleak November winds, and smote the  
woods,  
And the brown fields were herbless, and the  
shades

That met above the merry rivulet  
Were spoiled, I sought, I loved them still,—  
they seemed

Like old companions in adversity  
Still there was beauty in my walks, the brook,  
Bordered with sparkling frostwork, was as gay  
As with its fringe of summer flowers Afar, 30  
The village with its spires, the path of streams,  
And dim receding valleys, had before  
By interposing trees, lay visible  
Through the bare grove, and my familiar  
haunts

Seemed new to me Nor was I slow to come  
Among them, when the clouds, from their still  
skirts

Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,  
And all was white The pure keen air abroad,

Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard  
 Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee, 40  
 Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept  
 Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds  
 That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,  
 Patient, and waiting with the soft breath of  
 Spring,

Feared not the piercing spirit of the North  
 The snowbird twittered on the beechen  
 bough,

And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches  
 bent

Beneath its bright cold burden, and kept dry  
 A circle, on the earth, of withered leaves,  
 The partridge found a shelter. Through the  
 snow 50

The rabbit sprang away The lighter track  
 Of fox, and the raccoon's broad path were  
 there,

Crossing each other From his hollow tree,  
 The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts  
 Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway  
 Of winter blast, to shake them from their hold

But winter has yet brighter scenes,—he  
 boasts

Splendors beyond what gorgeous Summer  
 knows,

Or Autumn, with his many fruits, and woods  
 All flushed with many hues Come, when the  
 rains 60

Have glazed the snow, and clothed the trees  
 with ice,

While the slant sun of February pours  
 Into the bowers a flood of light Approach!  
 The incrustated surface shall upbear thy steps,  
 And the broad arching portals of the grove  
 Welcome thy entering. Look! the massy  
 trunks

Are cased in the pure crystal, each light spray,  
 Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,  
 Is studded with its trembling water-drops,  
 That glimmer with an amethystine light 70  
 But round the parent stem the long low  
 boughs

Bend in a glittering ring, and arbors hide  
 The glassy floor Oh! you might deem the  
 spot.

The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,  
 Deep in the womb of earth—where the gems  
 grow,

And diamonds put forth radiant rods and bud  
 With amethyst and topaz—and the place  
 Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam  
 That dwells in them, or haply the vast hall  
 Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night 80  
 And fades not in the glory of the sun,  
 Where crystal columns send forth slender  
 shafts

And crossing arches, and fantastic aisles  
 Wind from the sight in brightness and are lost  
 Among the crowded pillars Raise thine eye  
 Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault,  
 There the blue sky and the white drifting  
 cloud

Look in Again the wildered fancy dreams  
 Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,  
 And fixed, with all their branching jets, in  
 air, 90

And all their sluices sealed All, all is light,  
 Light without shade But all shall pass away  
 With the next sun from numberless vast  
 trunks

Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound  
 Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve  
 Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was  
 wont

And it is pleasant, when the noisy streams  
 Are just set free, and milder suns melt off  
 The plashy snow, save only the firm drift  
 In the deep glen or the close shade of pines, 100  
 'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke  
 Roll up among the maples of the hill,  
 Where the shrill sound of youthful voices  
 wakes

The shriller echo, as the clear pure lymph,  
 That from the wounded trees, in twinkling  
 drops,

Falls, 'mid the golden brightness of the morn',  
 Is gathered in with brimming pails, and oft,  
 Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of ax  
 Makes the woods ring Along the quiet air  
 Come and float calmly off the soft light  
 clouds, 110

Such as you see in summer, and the winds  
 Scarce stir the branches Lodged in sunny  
 cleft,

Where the cold breezes come not, blooms  
 alone

The little windflower, whose just opened eye  
 Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at—

Starting the loiterer in the naked groves  
 With unexpected beauty, for the time  
 Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar  
 And ere it comes, the encountering winds  
     shall oft  
 Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds 120  
 Shade heaven, and, bounding on the frozen  
     earth,  
 Shall fall their volleyed stores, rounded like  
     hail  
 And white like snow, and the loud North  
     again  
 Shall buffet the vexed forest in his rage  
 1820 1821

#### AN INDIAN AT THE BURIAL- PLACE OF HIS FATHERS

Like Freneau, Irving, and Cooper, Bryant took a romantic interest in the vanishing Indian "Monument Mountain," "The Indian Girl's Lament," and "The Prairies" are other poems in which this interest also appears. Note the cosmic speculation at the close, like that of "The Prairies" and "The Flood of Years."

It is the spot I came to seek—  
 My father's ancient burial-place,  
 Ere from these vales, ashamed and weak,  
     Withdrew our wasted race  
 It is the spot—I know it well—  
 Of which our old traditions tell  
  
 For here the upland bank sends out  
     A ridge toward the riverside,  
 I know the shaggy hills about, 10  
     The meadows smooth and wide,  
 The plains, that, toward the southern sky,  
 Fenced east and west by mountains lie  
  
 A white man, gazing on the scene,  
     Would say a lovely spot was here,  
 And praise the lawns, so fresh and green,  
     Between the hills so sheer  
 I like it not—I would the plain  
 Lay in its tall old groves again  
  
 The sheep are on the slopes around,  
     The cattle in the meadows feed, 20  
 And laborers turn the crumbling ground,  
     Or drop the yellow seed,  
 And prancing steeds, in trappings gay,  
 Whirl the bright chariot o'er the way

Methinks it were a nobler sight  
 To see these vales in woods arrayed,  
 Their summits in the golden light,  
     Their trunks in grateful shade,  
 And herds of deer that bounding go  
 O'er hills and prostrate trees below 30

And then to mark the lord of all,  
 The forest hero, trained to wars,  
 Quivered and plumed, and lithe and tall,  
 And seamed with glorious scars,  
 Walk forth, amid his reign, to dare  
 The wolf, and grapple with the bear

This bank, in which the dead were laid,  
 Was sacred when its soil was ours,  
 Hither the silent Indian maid  
     Brought wreaths of beads and flowers, 40  
 And the gray chief and gifted seer  
 Worshipped the god of thunders here

But now the wheat is green and hugh  
 On clods that hid the warrior's breast,  
 And scattered in the furrows lie  
     The weapons of his rest,  
 And there, in the loose sand, is thrown  
 Of his large arm the mouldering bone

Ah, little thought the strong and brave  
 Who bore their lifeless chieftain forth— 50  
 Or the young wife that weeping gave  
     Her first-born to the earth,  
 That the pale race who waste us now  
 Among their bones should guide the plough.

They waste us—ay—like April snow  
 In the warm noon, we shrink away,  
 And fast they follow, as we go  
     Toward the setting day—  
 Till they shall fill the land, and we  
 Are driven into the Western sea 60

But I behold a fearful sign,  
 To which the white men's eyes are blind,  
 Their race may vanish hence, like mine,  
     And leave no trace behind,  
 Save ruins o'er the region spread,  
 And the white stones above the dead.

Before these fields were shorn and tilled,  
 Full to the brim our rivers flowed,  
 The melody of waters filled  
     The fresh and boundless wood, 70

And torrents dashed and rivulets played,  
And fountains spouted in the shade.

Those grateful sounds are heard no more,  
The springs are silent in the sun,  
The rivers, by the blackened shore,  
With lessening current run,  
The realm our tribes are crushed to get  
May be a barren desert yet.

1824

## THE MURDERED TRAVELLER

WHEN Spring, to woods and wastes around,  
Brought bloom and joy again,  
The murdered traveller's bones were found,  
Far down a narrow glen

The fragrant birch, above him, hung  
Her tassels in the sky,  
And many a vernal blossom sprung,  
And nodded careless by

The redbird warbled, as he wrought  
His hanging nest o'er head,  
And fearless, near the fatal spot,  
Her young the partridge led.

10

But there was weeping far away,  
And gentle eyes, for him,  
With watching many an anxious day,  
Were sorrowful and dim

They little knew, who loved him so,  
The fearful death he met,  
When shouting o'er the desert snow,  
Unarmed, and hard beset,—

20

Nor how, when round the frosty pole  
The northern dawn was red,  
The mountain wolf and wildcat stole  
To banquet on the dead,—

Nor how, when strangers found his bones,  
They dressed the hasty bier,  
And marked his grave with nameless stones,  
Unmoistened by a tear

But long they looked, and feared, and wept,  
Within his distant home,  
And dreamed, and started as they slept,  
For joy that he was come.

30

Long, long they looked—but never spied  
His welcome step again,  
Nor knew the fearful death he died  
Far down that narrow glen

1824

1825

## A FOREST HYMN

THE groves were God's first temples Ere  
man learned  
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,  
And spread the roof above them—ere he  
framed  
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back  
The sound of anthems, in the darkling wood,  
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,  
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks  
And supplication For his simple heart  
Might not resist the sacred influence  
Which, from the sully twilight of the place, 10  
And from the gray old trunks that high in  
heaven  
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the  
sound  
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once  
All their green tops, stole over him, and  
bowed  
His spirit with the thought of boundless  
power  
And inaccessible majesty Ah, why  
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect  
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore  
Only among the crowd, and under roofs  
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at  
least, 20  
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,  
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find  
Acceptance in His ear

Father, thy hand  
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou  
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst  
look down  
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose  
All these fair ranks of trees They, in thy sun,  
Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy  
breeze,  
And shot toward heaven. The century-living  
crow  
Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and  
died 30

Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,  
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,  
Fit shrine for humble worshiper to hold  
Communion with his Maker These dim  
vaults,

These winding aisles, of human pomp or  
pride

Report not No fantastic carvings show  
The boast of our vain race to change the form  
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou  
fill'st

The solitude Thou art in the soft winds  
That run along the summit of these trees 40  
In music, thou art in the cooler breath  
That from the inmost darkness of the place  
Comes, scarcely felt, the barky trunks, the  
ground,

The fresh moist ground, are all insunct with  
thee

Here is continual worship,—Nature, here,  
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,  
Enjoys thy presence Noiselessly, around,  
From perch to perch, the solitary bird  
Passes, and yon clear spring, that, midst its  
herbs,

Wells softly forth and wandering steep the  
roots 50

Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale  
Of all the good it does Thou hast not left  
Thyself without a witness, in the shades,  
Of thy perfections Grandeur, strength, and  
grace

Are here to speak of thee This mighty oak—  
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem  
Almost annihilated—not a prince,  
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,  
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he  
Wears the green coronal of leaves with  
which 60

Thy hand has graced him Nestled at his root  
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare  
Of the broad sun That delicate forest flower,  
With scented breath and look so like a smile,  
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mold,  
An emanation of the indwelling Life,  
A visible token of the upholding Love,  
That are the soul of this great universe

My heart is awed within me when I think  
Of the great miracle that still goes on, 70  
In silence, round me—the perpetual work

Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed  
Forever. Written on thy works I read  
The lesson of thy own eternity.  
Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,  
How on the faltering footsteps of decay  
Youth presses—ever gay and beautiful youth  
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees  
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors  
Molder beneath them Oh, there is not lost 80  
One of earth's charms upon her bosom yet,  
After the flight of untold centuries,  
The freshness of her far beginning lies  
And yet shall lie Life mocks the idle hate  
Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats him-  
self

Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulcher,  
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe  
Makes his own nourishment. For he came  
forth

From thine own bosom, and shall have no end

There have been holy men who hid them-  
selves 90

Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave  
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they  
outlived

The generation born with them, nor seemed  
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks  
Around them,—and there have been holy  
men

Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus  
But let me often to these solitudes  
Retire, and in thy presence reassure  
My feeble virtue Here its enemies,  
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink  
And tremble and are still O God! when  
thou 101

Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire  
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,  
With all the waters of the firmament,  
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the  
woods

And drowns the villages, when, at thy call,  
Uprises the great deep and throws himself  
Upon the continent, and overwhelms  
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight  
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power, 110  
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?  
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face  
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath  
Of the mad unchained elements to teach

Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,  
In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,  
And to the beautiful order of thy works  
Learn to conform the order of our lives

1824

1825

## THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

An examination of the poems written before 1830 will show a surprising range of experimentation in verse forms, aside from the blank verse line which was his most effective medium. Here the combination of verse movement and sound effects is finely suited to the tone of the poem.

The melancholy days are come, the saddest  
Of the year,  
Of wailing winds and naked woods, and  
meadows brown and sere  
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn  
leaves lie dead,  
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the  
rabbit's tread,  
The robin and the wren are flown, and from  
the shrubs the jay,  
And from the wood-top calls the crow  
through all the gloomy day

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers,  
that lately sprang and stood  
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous  
sisterhood?  
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle  
race of flowers  
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair  
and good of ours  
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold  
November rain  
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the  
lovely ones again

The windflower and the violet, they perished  
long ago,  
And the briar-rose and the orchis died amid  
the summer glow;  
But on the hills the goldenrod, and the aster  
in the wood,  
And the yellow sunflower by the brook in  
autumn beauty stood,  
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven,  
as falls the plague on men,  
And the brightness of their smile was gone,  
from upland, glade, and glen

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as  
still such days will come,  
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their  
winter home,

20

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard,  
though all the trees are still,  
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of  
the rill,

The south wind searches for the flowers whose  
fragrance late he bore,  
And sighs to find them in the wood and by  
the stream no more

And then I think of one who in her youthful  
beauty died,  
The fair meek blossom that grew up and  
faded by my side  
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the  
forests cast the leaf,  
And we wail that one so lovely should have  
a life so brief

Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that  
young friend of ours,  
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with  
the flowers

30

1825

## JUNE

I GAZED upon the glorious sky  
And the green mountains round,  
And thought that when I came to lie  
At rest within the ground,  
'Twere pleasant, that in flowery June,  
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,  
And groves a joyous sound,  
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,  
The rich, green mountain-turf should break

A cell within the frozen mould,  
A coffin borne through sleet,  
And icy clouds above it rolled,  
While fierce the tempests beat—  
Away!—I will not think of these—  
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,  
Earth green beneath the feet,  
And be the damp mould gently pressed  
Into my narrow place of rest

10

There through the long, long summer hours,  
The golden light should lie,  
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers  
Stand in their beauty by

20

The oriole should build and tell  
His love-tale close beside my cell,  
The idle butterfly  
Should rest him there, and there be heard  
The housewife bee and hummingbird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon  
Come, from the village sent,  
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon 30  
With fairy laughter blent?  
And what if, in the evening light,  
Betrothed lovers walk in sight  
Of my low monument?  
I would the lovely scene around  
Might know no sadder sight nor sound

I know that I no more should see  
The season's glorious show,  
Nor would its brightness shine for me,  
Nor its wild music flow, 40  
But if, around my place of sleep,  
The friends I love should come to weep,  
They might not haste to go  
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom  
Should keep them lingering by my tomb

These to their softened hearts should bear  
The thought of what has been,  
And speak of one who cannot share  
The gladness of the scene, 50  
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills  
The circuit of the summer hills,  
Is that his grave is green,  
And deeply would their hearts rejoice  
To hear again his living voice  
1825 1826

# A MEDITATION ON RHODE ISLAND COAL

This poem not only confutes the idea that Bryant had no sense of humor but also illustrates the all-pervasive influence in the eighteen-twenties of Byron's verse satires, *Beppo* and *Don Juan*

"Decolor, obacurus, vilis, non ille respexam  
Cesariem regnum, non candida virginis ornat  
Colla, nec magni splendet per cingula morsu  
Sed nova si nigri videas miracula saxi,  
Tunc superat pulchros cultus et quicquid Eois  
*Indus hitoribus rubra scrutatur in alga* "

CLAUDIAN

I sat beside the glowing grate, fresh heaped  
With Newport coal, and as the flame grew  
bright  
—The many-colored flame—and played and  
leaped,  
I thought of rainbows, and the northern light,  
Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, the *Treasury Report*,  
And other brilliant matters of the sort

At last I thought of that fair isle which sent  
The mineral fuel, on a summer day  
I saw it once, with heat and travel spent,  
And scratched by dwarf-oaks in the hollow  
way 10  
Now dragged through sand, now jolted over  
stone—  
A rugged road through rugged Tiverton

And hotter grew the air, and hollower grew  
The deep-worn path, and horror-struck, I  
thought,  
Where will this dreary passage lead me to?  
This long dull road, so narrow, deep, and hot?  
I looked to see it dive in earth outright,  
I looked—but saw a far more welcome sight

Like a soft mist upon the evening shore,  
At once a lovely isle before me lay, 20  
Smooth, and with tender verdure covered o'er,  
As if just risen from its calm inland bay,  
Sloped each way gently to the grassy edge,  
And the small waves that dallied with the  
sedge

The barley was just reaped, the heavy sheaves  
Lay on the stubble-field, the tall maize stood  
Dark in its summer growth, and shook its  
leaves,  
And bright the sunlight played on the young  
wood—

For fifty years ago, the old men say, 29  
The Briton hewed their ancient groves away

I saw where fountains freshened the green  
land,  
And where the pleasant road, from door to  
door,  
With rows of cherry-trees on either hand,  
Went wandering all that fertile region o'er—  
Rogue's Island once—but when the rogues  
were dead,  
Rhode Island was the name it took instead.



Beautiful island then it only seemed  
A lovely stranger; it has grown a friend.  
I gazed on its smooth slopes, but never  
dreamed

How soon that green and quiet isle would  
send 40

The treasures of its womb across the sea,  
To warm a poet's room and boil his tea.

Dark anthracite that reddenest on my hearth,  
Thou in those island mines didst slumber  
long,

But now thou art come forth to move the  
earth,

And put to shame the men that mean thee  
wrong.

Thou shalt be coals of fire to those that hate  
thee,

And warm the shins of all that underrate thee

Yea, they did wrong thee foully—they who  
mocked

Thy honest face, and said thou wouldst not  
burn, 50

Of hewing thee to chimney-pieces talked,  
And grew profane, and swore, in bitter scorn,  
That men might to thy inner caves retire,  
And there, unsinged, abide the day of fire.

Yet is thy greatness nigh I pause to state,  
That I too have seen greatness—even I—  
Shook hands with Adams, stared at La  
Fayette,

When, barehead, in the hot noon of July,  
He would not let the umbrella be held o'er  
him,

For which three cheers burst from the mob  
before him. 60

And I have seen—not many months ago—  
An eastern Governor in chapeau bras  
And military coat, a glorious show!  
Ride forth to visit the reviews, and ah!  
How oft he smiled and bowed to Jonathan!  
How many hands were shook and votes were  
won!

'Twas a great Governor, thou too shalt be  
Great in thy turn, and wide shall spread thy  
fame

And swiftly; furthest Maine shall hear of thee,  
And cold New Brunswick gladden at thy  
name, 70

And, faintly through its sleets, the weeping  
isle  
That sends the Boston folks their cod shall  
smile

For thou shalt forge vast railways, and shalt  
heat

The hissing rivers into steam and drive  
Huge masses from thy mines, on iron feet,  
Walking their steady way, as if alive,  
Northward, till everlasting ice besets thee,  
And South as far as the grim Spaniard lets  
thee

Thou shalt make mighty engines swim the sea,  
Like its own monsters—boats that for a  
guinea 80

Will take a man to Havre—and shalt be  
The moving soul of many a spinning-jenny,  
And ply thy shuttles, till a bard can wear  
As good a suit of broadcloth as the mayor

Then we will laugh at winter when we hear  
The grim old churl about our dwellings rave  
Thou, from that "ruler of the inverted year,"  
Shalt pluck the knotty scepter Cowper gave,  
And pull him from his sledge, and drag him  
in,

And melt the icicles from off his chin 90  
1826

## THE EVENING WIND

SPIRIT that breakest through my lattice, thou  
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,  
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my  
brow,

Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,  
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,  
Roughening their crests, and scattering  
high their spray,

And swelling the white sail I welcome thee  
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the  
seal

Nor I alone, a thousand bosoms round  
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight, 10  
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound  
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night,  
And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,  
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the  
sight

Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,  
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting  
earth!

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,  
Carl the still waters, bright with stars, and  
rouse

The wide old wood from his majestic rest,  
Summoning from the innumerable boughs  
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his  
breast. 21

Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly  
bows

The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,  
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep  
the grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head  
To feel thee, thou shalt kiss the child asleep,  
And dry the moistened curls that overspread  
His temples, while his breathing grows  
more deep,

And they who stand about the sick man's bed  
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep, 30  
And softly part his curtains to allow  
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go—but the circle of eternal change,  
Which is the life of Nature, shall restore,  
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty  
range,

Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once  
more, 36  
Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,  
Shall tell the homesick mariner of the shore,  
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem  
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream

1829

1830

## TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

It is interesting to contrast the language and  
construction of this poem with those of the early  
"The Yellow Violet"

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,  
And colored with the heaven's own blue,  
That openest when the quiet light  
Succeeds the keen and frosty night,

Thou comest not when violets lean  
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,  
Or columbines, in purple dressed,  
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,  
When woods are bare and birds are flown, 10  
And frost and shortening days portend  
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye  
Look through its fringes to the sky,  
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall  
A flower from its cerulean wall

I would that thus, when I shall see  
The hour of death draw near to me,  
Hope, blossoming within my heart,  
May look to heaven as I depart 20

1829

1832

## SONG OF MARION'S MEN

Our band is few but true and tried,  
Our leader frank and bold,  
The British soldier trembles  
When Marion's name is told.  
Our fortress is the good greenwood,  
Our tent the cypress-tree,  
We know the forest round us,  
As seamen know the sea  
We know its walls of thorny vines,  
Its glades of reedy grass, 10  
Its safe and silent islands  
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery  
That little dread us near!  
On them shall light at midnight  
A strange and sudden fear  
When, waking to their tents on fire,  
They grasp their arms in vain,  
And they who stand to face us  
Are beat to earth again, 20  
And they who fly in terror deem  
A mighty host behind,  
And hear the tramp of thousands  
Upon the hollow wind

Then sweet the hour that brings release  
From danger and from toil  
We talk the battle over,  
And share the battle's spoil.  
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,  
As if a hunt were up, 30  
And woodland flowers are gathered  
To crown the soldier's cup.

With merry songs we mock the wind  
That in the pine-top grieves,  
And slumber long and sweetly  
On beds of oaken leaves

Well knows the fair and friendly moon  
The band that Marion leads—  
The glitter of their rifles,  
The scampering of their steeds  
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb  
Across the moonlight plain,  
'Tis life to feel the night-wind  
That lifts the tossing mane  
A moment in the British camp—  
A moment—and away  
Back to the pathless forest,  
Before the peep of day

Grave men there are by broad Santec,  
Grave men with hoary hairs,  
Their hearts are all with Marion,  
For Marion are their prayers  
And lovely ladies greet our band  
With kindest welcoming,  
With smiles like those of summer,  
And tears like those of spring  
For them we wear these trusty arms,  
And lay them down no more  
Till we have driven the Briton,  
Forever, from our shore

40

50

60

1831

### THE PRAIRIES

Bryant's first visit to Illinois, where some of his brothers had settled, was made in 1832 and his impressions of the expanse of grassy plains are recorded in this poem

THESE are the gardens of the Desert,<sup>1</sup> these  
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful  
For which the speech of England has no  
name—

The Prairies I behold them for the first,  
And my heart swells while the dilated sight  
Takes in the encircling vastness, Lo, they  
stretch

In airy undulations, far away,  
As if the Ocean, in his gentlest swell,  
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed

<sup>1</sup> wilderness, uninhabited area, as regularly in eighteenth century English

And motionless forever Motionless? 10  
No, they are all unchained again the clouds  
Sweep over with their shadows, and beneath,  
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye,  
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase  
The sunny ridges Breezes of the South,  
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flow-  
ers,

And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on  
high,  
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not, ye have  
played

Among the palms of Mexico and vines  
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks  
That from the fountains of Sonora glide 21  
Into the calm Pacific Have ye fanned  
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?

Man hath no part in all this glorious work  
The hand that built the firmament hath  
heaved

And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown  
their slopes

With herbage, planted them with island  
groves,  
And hedged them round with forests Fitting  
floor

For this magnificent temple of the sky,  
With flowers whose glory and whose multi-  
tude 30

Rival the constellations! The great heavens  
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love—  
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,  
Than that which bends above our Eastern  
hills

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my sward,  
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his  
sides,

The hollow beating of his footstep seems  
A sacrilegious sound I think of those  
Upon whose rest his tramples are they here,  
The dead of other days? and did the dust 40  
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life  
And burn with passion? Let the mighty  
mounds<sup>1</sup>

That overlook the rivers, or that rise  
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,  
Answer A race that long has passed away

<sup>1</sup> These great remains of a vanished race appealed greatly to the imagination of Bryant and his contemporary Americans.

Built them, a disciplined and populous race  
Heaped with long toil, the earth, while yet the  
Greek

Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms  
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock  
The glittering Parthenon These ample fields  
Nourished their harvests, here their herds  
were fed, 51

When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,  
And bowed his maned shoulder to the yoke  
All day this desert murmured with their toils,  
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and  
wooded

In a forgotten language, and old tunes,  
From instruments of unremembered form,  
Gave the soft winds a voice The red man  
came,

The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce,  
And the mound-builders vanished from the  
earth 60

The solitude of centuries untold  
Has settled where they dwelt The prairie-wolf  
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug  
den

Yawns by my path The gopher mines the  
ground

Where stood their swarming cities All is  
gone

All save the piles of earth that hold their bones,  
The platforms where they worshiped un-  
known gods,

The barriers which they builded from the soil  
To keep the foe at bay, till o'er the walls 69  
The wild beleaguers broke, and, one by one,  
The strongholds of the plain were forced and  
heaped

With corpses The brown vultures of the  
wood

Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchers.  
And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast  
Haply some solitary fugitive,  
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense  
Of desolation and of fear became  
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die  
Man's better nature triumphed then kind  
words

Welcomed and soothed him, the rude con-  
querors 80

Seated the captive with their chiefs, he chose  
A bride among the maidens, and at length  
Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the wife

Of his first love, and her sweet little ones  
Butchered amid their shrieks, with all his race

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise  
Races of living things, glorious in strength,  
And perish, as the quickening breath of God  
Fills them or is withdrawn The red man, too,  
Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so  
long, 90

And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought  
A wilder hunting-ground The beaver builds  
No longer by these streams, but far away,  
On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back  
The white man's face, among Missouri's  
springs,

And pools whose issues swell the Oregon,  
He rears his little Venice. In these plains  
The bison feeds no more. twice twenty  
leagues

Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,  
Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake  
The earth with thundering steps—yet here I  
meet 101

His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool

Still this great solitude is quick with life  
Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers  
They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,  
And birds that scarce have learned the fear of  
man,

Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,  
Startlingly beautiful The graceful deer  
Bounds to the wood at my approach The bee,  
A more adventurous colonist than man, 110  
With whom he came across the eastern deep,  
Fills the savannas with his murmurings,  
And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,  
Within the hollow oak. I listen long  
To his domestic hum, and think I hear  
The sound of that advancing multitude  
Which soon shall fill these deserts. from the  
ground

Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice  
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn  
Of Sabbath worshippers, the low of herds 120  
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain  
Over the dark-brown furrows All at once  
A fresher wind sweeps by and breaks my  
dream,

And I am in the wilderness alone.

## EARTH

Written at Pisa, in Italy, this poem is thus praised by W. A. Bradley (*Bryant*, pp. 142-143): "This is a style of writing in which Bryant has never been excelled or perhaps even equalled. No poet has ever given so well as he an imaginative sense of immensity, and of the mystery of the infinite in nature."

A MIDNIGHT black with clouds is in the sky,  
I seem to feel, upon my limbs, the weight  
Of its vast brooding shadow. All in vain  
Turns the tired eye in search of form, no star  
Pierces the pitchy veil, no ruddy blaze,  
From dwellings lighted by the cheerful hearth,  
Tinges the flowering summits of the grass.  
No sound of life is heard, no village hum,  
Nor measured tramp of footstep in the path,  
Nor rush of wind, while, on the breast of  
Earth, 10

I lie and listen to her mighty voice  
A voice of many tones—sent up from streams  
That wander through the gloom, from woods  
unseen

Swayed by the sweeping of the tides of air,  
From rocky chasms where darkness dwells all  
day,  
And hollows of the great invisible hills,  
And sands that edge the ocean, stretching far  
Into the night—a melancholy sound!

O Earth! dost thou too sorrow for the past  
Like man thy offspring? Do I hear thee mourn  
Thy childhood's unreturning hours, thy  
springs 21

Gone with their genial airs and melodies,  
The gentle generations of thy flowers,  
And thy majestic groves of olden time,  
Perished with all their dwellers? Dost thou  
wail

For that fair age of which the poets tell,  
Ere yet the winds grew keen with frost, or  
fire

Fell with the rains or spouted from the hills,  
To blast thy greenness, while the virgin night  
Was guiltless and salubrious as the day? 30  
Or haply dost thou grieve for those that  
die—

For living things that trod thy paths awhile,  
The love of thee and heaven—and now they  
sleep

Mixed with the shapeless dust on which thy  
herds

Trample and graze? I too must grieve with  
thee,

O'er loved ones lost. Their graves are far  
away

Upon thy mountains, yet, while I recline  
Alone, in darkness, on thy naked soil,  
The mighty nourisher and burial-place  
Of man, I feel that I embrace their dust. 40

Hal how the murmur deepens! I perceive  
And tremble at its dreadful import. Earth  
Uplifts a general cry for guilt and wrong,  
And heaven is listening. The forgotten graves  
Of the heartbroken utter forth their plaint.  
The dust of her who loved and was betrayed,  
And him who died neglected in his age,  
The sepulchers of those who for mankind  
Labored, and earned the recompense of scorn,  
Ashes of martyrs for the truth, and bones 50  
Of those who, in the strife for liberty,  
Were beaten down, their corpses given to dogs,  
Their names to infamy, all find a voice.  
The nook in which the captive, overtoiled,  
Lay down to rest at last, and that which holds  
Childhood's sweet blossoms, crushed by cruel  
hands,

Send up a plaintive sound. From battlefields,  
Where heroes madly drove and dashed their  
hosts

Against each other, rises up a noise,  
As if the armed multitudes of dead 60

Stirred in their heavy slumber. Mournful tones  
Come from the green abysses of the sea—

A story of the crimes the guilty sought  
To hide beneath its waves. The glens, the  
groves,

Paths in the thicket, pools of running brook,  
And banks and depths of lake, and streets and  
lanes

Of cities, now that living sounds are hushed,  
Murmur of guilty force and treachery.

Here where I rest, the vales of Italy  
Are round me, populous from early time, 70

And field of the tremendous warfare waged  
'Twixt good and evil. Who, alas! shall dare  
Interpret to man's ear the mingled voice  
That comes from her old dungeons yawning  
now

To the black air, her amphitheatres,

Where the dew gathers on the mouldering  
stones,

And fanes of banished gods, and open tombs,  
And roofless palaces, and streets and hearths  
Of cities dug from their volcanic graves?

I hear a sound of many languages, 80

The utterance of nations now no more,  
Driven out by mightier, as the days of heaven  
Chase one another from the sky The blood  
Of freemen shed by freemen, till strange lords  
Came in their hour of weakness, and made fast  
The yoke that yet is worn, cries out to heaven

What then shall cleanse thy bosom, gentle  
earth,

From all its painful memories of guilt?  
The whelming flood, or the renewing fire,

Or the slow change of time?—that so, at last,  
The horrid tale of perjury and strife, 91

Murder and spoil, which men call history,  
May seem a fable, like the inventions told

By poets of the gods of Greece O thou  
Who sittest far beyond the Atlantic deep,

Among the sources of thy glorious streams,  
My native Land of Groves! a newer page

In the great record of the world is thine,  
Shall it be fairer? Fear, and friendly Hope,

And Envy, watch the issue, while the lines 100  
By which thou shalt be judged are written  
down.

1834

1835

### THE BATTLEFIELD

This poem, like Longfellow's later "The Arsenal  
at Springfield," is a part of the first American agitation  
for world peace, most active in the eight-  
een-thirties and forties

ONCE this soft turf, this rivulet's sands,

Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,  
And fiery hearts and armed hands

Encountered in the battle-cloud

Ah! never shall the land forget

How gushed the lifeblood of her brave,

Gushed, warm with hope and valor yet,

Upon the soil they fought to save.

Now all is calm, and fresh, and still;

Alone the chirp of flitting bird,

And talk of children on the hill,

And bell of wandering kine, are heard

10

No solemn host goes trailing by

The black-mouthed gun and staggering  
wain,

Men start not at the battle-cry,

Oh, be it never heard again!

Soon rested those who fought; but thou

Who minglest in the harder strife

For truths which men receive not now,

Thy warfare only ends with life 20

A friendless warfare! lingering long

Through weary day and weary year,

A wild and many-weaponed throng

Hang on thy front, and flank, and rear

Yet nerve thy spirit to the proof,

And blench not at thy chosen lot

The timid good may stand aloof,

The sage may frown—yet faint thou not

Nor heed the shaft too surely cast,

The foul and hissing bolt of scorn, 30

For with thy side shall dwell, at last,

The victory of endurance born,

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again,

Th' eternal years of God are hers,

But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,

And dies among his worshippers

Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,

When those who helped thee flee in fear,

Die full of hope and manly trust,

Like those who fell in battle here. 40

Another hand thy sword shall wield,

Another hand the standard wave,

Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed

The blast of triumph o'er thy grave.

1837

### THE ANTIQUITY OF FREEDOM

HERE are old trees, tall oaks, and gnarled  
pines,

That stream with gray-green mosses; here  
the ground

Was never trenched by spade, and flowers  
spring up

Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet

To linger here, among the flitting birds

And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and  
winds

That shake the leaves and scatter, as they pass,  
A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set  
With pale-blue berries. In these peaceful  
shades—

Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old— 10  
My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,  
Back to the earliest days of liberty

O Freedom! thou art not, as poets dream,  
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,  
And wavy tresses gushing from the cap<sup>1</sup>  
With which the Roman master crowned his  
slave

When he took off the gyves A bearded man,  
Armed to the teeth, art thou, one mailed hand  
Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword,  
thy brow

Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred 20  
With tokens of old wars, thy massive limbs  
Are strong with struggling Power at thee  
has launched

His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee,  
They could not quench the life thou hast  
from heaven,

Merciless Power has dug thy dungeon deep,  
And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,  
Have forged thy chain, yet, while he deems  
thee bound,

The links are shivered, and the prison-walls  
Fall outward, terribly thou springest forth,  
As springs the flame above a burning pile, 30  
And shoutest to the nations, who return  
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies

Thy birthright was not given by human  
hands

Thou wert twinborn with man In pleasant  
fields,

While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with  
him,

To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,  
And teach the reed to utter simple airs  
Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,  
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,  
His only foes, and thou with him didst draw  
The earliest furrow on the mountain-side, 41  
Soft with the deluge. Tyranny himself,  
Thy enemy, although of reverend look,  
Hoary with many years, and far obeyed,

<sup>1</sup> the Liberty Cap, dating from the French Revolution, which adorns the head of Columbia on American coins

Is later born than thou, and as he meets  
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,  
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse  
of years,

But he shall fade into a feebleness—  
Feebler, yet subtler He shall weave his  
snares, 50

And spring them on thy careless steps, and  
clap

His withered hands, and from their ambush  
call

His hordes to fall upon thee He shall send  
Quaint maskers, wearing fair and gallant  
forms

To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words  
To charm thy ear, while his sly limbs, by  
stealth,

Twine round thee threads of steel, light thread  
on thread,

That grow to fetters, or bind down thy arms  
With chains concealed in chaplets Oh! not  
yet

Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by 60  
Thy sword, nor yet, O Freedom! close thy lids  
In slumber, for thine enemy never sleeps,  
And thou must watch and combat till the day  
Of the new earth and heaven But wouldst  
thou rest

Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men,  
These old and friendly solitudes invite  
Thy visit They, while yet the forest-trees  
Were young upon the unviolated earth,  
And yet the moss-stains on the rock were  
new, 69

Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced  
1842

### O MOTHER OF A MIGHTY RACE

Bryant's reaction on returning from a visit to  
monarchical Europe just before the abortive revolution-  
ary movements of 1848

O MOTHER of a mighty race,  
Yet lovely in thy youthful grace!  
The elder dames, thy haughty peers,  
Admire and hate thy blooming years  
With words of shame

And taunts of scorn they join thy name.

For on thy cheeks the glow is spread  
 That unts thy morning hills with red,  
 Thy step—the wild-deer's rustling feet  
 Within thy woods are not more fleet, 10  
     Thy hopeful eye  
 Is bright as thine own sunny sky

Ay, let them rail—those haughty ones,  
 While safe thou dwellest with thy sons  
 They do not know how loved thou art,  
 How many a fond and fearless heart  
     Would rise to throw  
 Its life between thee and the foe

They know not, in their hate and pride,  
 What virtues with thy children bide, 20  
 How true, how good, thy graceful maids  
 Make bright, like flowers, the valley-shades,  
     What generous men  
 Spring, like thine oaks, by hill and glen,—

What cordial welcomes greet the guest  
 By thy lone rivers of the West,  
 How faith is kept, and truth revered,  
 And man is loved, and God is feared,  
     In woodland homes,  
 And where the ocean border foams 30

There's freedom at thy gates and rest  
 For Earth's downtrodden and opprest,  
 A shelter for the hunted head,  
 For the starved laborer toil and bread  
     Power, at thy bounds,  
 Stops and calls back his baffled hounds.

O fair young mother! on thy brow  
 Shall sit a nobler grace than now  
 Deep in the brightness of the skies  
 The thronging years in glory rise, 40  
     And, as they fleet,  
 Drop strength and riches at thy feet.

Thine eye, with every coming hour,  
 Shall brighten, and thy form shall tower;  
 And when thy sisters, elder born,  
 Would brand thy name with words of scorn,  
     Before thine eye,  
 Upon their lips the taunt shall die

1846

1847

## THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

OH, slow to smite and swift to spare,  
 Gentle and merciful and just!  
 Who, in the fear of God, didst bear  
     The sword of power, a nation's trust!

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,  
 Amid the awe that hushes all,  
 And speak the anguish of a land  
     That shook with horror at thy fall

Thy task is done, the bond are free  
 We bear thee to an honored grave, 10  
 Whose proudest monument shall be  
     The broken fetters of the slave

Pure was thy life, its bloody close  
 Hath placed thee with the sons of light,  
 Among the noble host of those  
 Who perished in the cause of Right

1865

1866

## THE POET

Bryant, like Milton, Wordsworth, and Whitman, regarded the poet's calling with earnest seriousness. The poet's self-analysis in these lines somewhat offsets James Russell Lowell's judgment of him in the "Fable for Critics."

THOU who wouldst wear the name  
 Of poet 'mid thy brethren of mankind,  
 And clothe in words of flame  
     Thoughts that shall live within the general  
     mind!

Deem not the framing of a deathless lay  
 The pastime of a drowsy summer day.

But gather all thy powers  
 And wreak them on the verse that thou dost  
     weave,

And in thy lonely hours,  
 At silent morning or at wakeful eve, 10  
 While the warm current uncles through thy  
     veins

Set forth the burning words in fluent strains

No smooth array of phrase,  
 Artfully sought and ordered though it be,  
 Whence the cold rhymers lays

Upon his page with languid industry,  
 Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,  
 Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.



The secret wouldst thou know

To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?

Let thine own eyes o'erflow; 21

Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill,

Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be  
past,

And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast

Then, should thy verse appear

Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,

Touch the crude line with fear,

Save in the moment of impassioned thought,

Then summon back the original glow, and  
mend

The strain with rapture that with fire was  
penned. 30

Yet let no empty gust

Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,

A blast that whurls the dust

Along the howling street and dies away,

But feelings of calm power and mighty sweep,

Like currents journeying through the windless  
deep

Seek'st thou, in living lays,

To lumn the beauty of the earth and sky?

Before thine inner gaze

Let all that beauty in clear vision lie, 40

Look on it with exceeding love, and write

The words inspired by wonder and delight

Of tempests wouldst thou sing,

Or tell of battles—make thyself a part

Of the great tumult, cling

To the tossed wreck with terror in thy  
heart,

Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's  
height,

And strike and struggle in the thickest fight

So shalt thou frame a lay

That haply may endure from age to age, 50

And they who read shall say

"What witchery hangs upon this poet's  
page!

What art is his the written spells to find

That sway from mood to mood the willing  
mund!"

## THE FLOOD OF YEARS

"The Flood of Years," in many ways reminiscent of "The Ages," Bryant's Phi Beta Kappa poem at Harvard, fifty-six years earlier, expresses two of his beliefs, the "circle of eternal change" and the permanence in eternity of all that is good and beautiful in history. Late in life he also turned to a belief in the immortality of the human spirit.

A MIGHTY Hand, from an exhaustless Urn,  
Pours forth the never-ending Flood of Years  
Among the nations. How the rushing waves  
Bear all before them! On their foremost edge,  
And there alone, is Life. The Present there  
Tosses and foams, and fills the air with roar  
Of mingled noises. There are they who toil,  
And they who strive, and they who feast, and  
they

Who hurry to and fro. The sturdy swain—  
Woodman and deliver with the spade—is  
there, 10

And busy artisan beside his bench,  
And pallid student with his written roll  
A moment on the mounting billow seen,  
The flood sweeps over them and they are  
gone

There groups of revellers, whose brows are  
twined

With roses, ride the topmost swell awhile,  
And as they raise their flowing cups and touch  
The clinking brim to brim, are whirled beneath  
The waves and disappear. I hear the jar  
Of beaten drums, and thunders that break  
forth 20

From cannon, where the advancing billow  
sends

Up to the sight long files of armed men,  
That hurry to the charge through flame and  
smoke.

The torrent bears them under, whelmed and  
hid

Slayer and slain, in heaps of bloody foam  
Down go the steed and rider, the plumed chief  
Sinks with his followers, the head that wears  
The imperial diadem goes down beside  
The felon's with cropped ear and branded  
cheek

A funeral-tram—the torrent sweeps away 30  
Bearers and bier and mourners. By the bed  
Of one who dies men gather sorrowing,  
And women weep aloud, the flood rolls on,

The wail is stifled and the sobbing group  
Borne under. Hark to that shrill, sudden shout,  
The cry of an applauding multitude,  
Swayed by some loud-voiced orator who  
wields

The living mass as if he were its soul  
The waters choke the shout and all is still  
Lo! next a kneeling crowd, and one who  
spreads 40

The hands in prayer—the engulfing wave  
o'ertakes

And swallows them and him A sculptor  
wields

The chisel, and the stricken marble grows  
To beauty, at his easel, eager-eyed,  
A painter stands, and sunshine at his touch  
Gathers upon his canvas, and life glows,  
A poet, as he paces to and fro,  
Murmurs his sounding lines Awhile they ride  
The advancing billow, till its tossing crest  
Strikes them and flings them under, while  
their tasks 50

Are yet unfinished See a mother smile  
On her young babe that smiles to her again,  
The torrent wrests it from her arms, she  
shrieks

And weeps, and midst her tears is carried  
down

A beam like that of moonlight turns the spray  
To glistening pearls, two lovers, hand in  
hand,

Rise on the billowy swell and fondly look  
Into each other's eyes The rushing flood  
Flings them apart the youth goes down, the  
maid

With hands outstretched in vain, and stream-  
ing eyes, 60

Waits for the next high wave to follow him  
An aged man succeeds, his bending form  
Sinks slowly Mingling with the sullen stream  
Gleam the white locks, and then are seen no  
more.

Lo! wider grows the stream—a sea-like  
flood

Saps earth's walled cities; massive palaces  
Crumble before it; fortresses and towers  
Dissolve in the swift waters, populous realms  
Swept by the torrent see their ancient tribes  
Engulfed and lost, their very languages 70  
Stifled, and never to be uttered more.

I pause and turn my eyes, and looking back  
Where that tumultuous flood has been, I see  
The silent ocean of the Past, a waste  
Of waters weltering over graves, its shores  
Strewn with the wreck of fleets where mast  
and hull

Drop away piecemeal; battlemented walls  
Frown idly, green with moss, and temples  
stand

Unroofed, forsaken by the worshipper  
There lie memorial stones, whence time has  
gnawed 80  
The graven legends, thrones of kings o'er-  
turned,

The broken altars of forgotten gods,  
Foundations of old cines and long streets  
Where never fall of human foot is heard,  
On all the desolate pavement I behold  
Dim glimmerings of lost jewels, far within  
The sleeping waters, diamond, sardonyx,  
Ruby and topaz, pearl and chrysolite,  
Once glittering at the banquet on fair brows  
That long ago were dust, and all around 90  
Strewn on the surface of that silent sea  
Are withering bridal wreaths, and glossy locks  
Shorn from dear brows by loving hands, and  
scrolls

O'er written, haply with fond words of love  
And vows of friendship, and fair pages flung  
Fresh from the printer's engine There they lie  
A moment, and then sink away from sight

I look, and the quick tears are in my eyes,  
For I behold in every one of these  
A blighted hope, a separate history 100  
Of human sorrows, telling of dear ties  
Suddenly broken, dreams of happiness  
Dissolved in air, and happy days too brief  
That sorrowfully ended, and I think  
How painfully the poor heart must have beat  
In bosoms without number, as the blow  
Was struck that slew their hope and broke  
their peace.

Sadly I turn and look before, where yet  
The Flood must pass, and I behold a mist  
Where swarm dissolving forms, the brood of  
Hope, 110  
Divinely fair, that rest on banks of flowers,  
Or wander among rainbows, fading soon  
And reappearing, haply giving place

To forms of grisly aspect such as Fear  
 Shapes from the idle air—where serpents lift  
 The head to strike, and skeletons stretch forth  
 Their bony arm in menace Further on  
 A belt of darkness seems to bar the way  
 Long, low, and distant, where the Life to come  
 Touches the Life that is The Flood of

Years

120

Rolls toward it near and nearer It must pass  
 That dismal barrier. What is there beyond?  
 Hear what the wise and good have said  
 Beyond

That belt of darkness, still the Years roll on  
 More gently, but with not less mighty sweep  
 They gather up again and softly bear  
 All the sweet lives that late were overwhelmed  
 And lost to sight, all that in them was good,  
 Noble, and truly great, and worthy of love—  
 The lives of infants and ingenuous youths, 130  
 Sages and saintly women who have made  
 Their households happy, all are raised and  
 borne

By that great current in its onward sweep,  
 Wandering and rippling with caressing waves  
 Around green islands with the breath  
 Of flowers that never wither. So they pass  
 From stage to stage along the shining course  
 Of that bright river, broadening like a sea.  
 As its smooth eddies curl along their way  
 They bring old friends together; hands are  
 clasped 140

In joy unspeakable, the mother's arms  
 Again are folded round the child she loved  
 And lost Old sorrows are forgotten now,  
 Or but remembered to make sweet the hour  
 That overpays them, wounded hearts that bled  
 Or broke are healed forever In the room  
 Of this brief-shadowed present, there shall be  
 A Present in whose reign no grief shall gnaw  
 The heart, and never shall a tender tie  
 Be broken, in whose reign the eternal Change  
 That waits on growth and aenon shall proceed 151

With everlasting Concord hand in hand

1876

### From EARLY AMERICAN POETRY

To a brief discussion of an inferior work, Solymann Brown's *An Essay on American Poetry, with Several Miscellaneous Pieces* (1818), in the *North American Review* for July, 1818, Bryant prefixed a survey of American poetry up to his time. Later in April, 1826, he delivered a series of four lectures on poetry at the request of the Athenaeum Society in New York. Throughout his life he produced a number of further critical articles and reviews. Bryant's chief poetical tenets, as summarized by H. H. Clark (*American Poets*, New York, 1936, p. 797), are (1) avoiding a "sickly and affected imitation" of the neo-classical poets of England, (2) avoiding affectations and conceits in language, (3) a preference for "a luminous style," (4) "a balanced harmony of emotion, understanding, and imagination," (5) images taken directly from nature, (6) a discriminating observation of the achievements and defects of other poets, (7) emphasis on the short lyric, (8) variation of meter, (9) concern with spiritual elevation and ethical beauty and elemental and universal themes.

Of the poetry of the United States different opinions have been entertained, and prejudice on the one side and partiality on the

other have equally prevented a just and rational estimate of its merits. Abroad our literature has fallen under unmerited contumely from those who were but slenderly acquainted with the subject on which they professed to decide, and at home, it must be confessed, that the swaggering and pompous pretensions of many have done not a little to provoke and excite the ridicule of foreigners. Either of these extremes exerts an injurious influence on the cause of letters in our country. To encourage exertion and embolden merit to come forward, it is necessary that they should be acknowledged and rewarded—few will have the confidence to solicit what has been withheld from claims as strong as theirs, or the courage to tread a path which presents no prospect but the melancholy wrecks of those who have gone before them. National gratitude—national pride—every high and generous feeling that attaches us to the land of our birth, or that exalts our characters as individuals, ask of us that we should foster the infant literature of our country, and that genius and industry, employing their efforts to hasten its perfection, should receive from our

hands that celebrity which reflects as much honor on the nation which confers it as on those to whom it is extended. On the other hand, it is not necessary for these purposes—it is even detrimental to bestow on mediocrity the praise due to excellence, and still more so is the attempt to persuade ourselves and others into an admiration of the faults of favorite writers. We make but a contemptible figure in the eyes of the world, and set ourselves up as objects of pity to our posterity, when we affect to rank the poets of our own country with those mighty masters of song who have flourished in Greece, Italy, and Britain. Such extravagant admiration may spring from a praiseworthy and patriotic motive, but it seems to us that it defeats its own object of encouraging our literature, by seducing those who would aspire to the favor of the public into an imitation of imperfect models, and leading them to rely too much on the partiality of their countrymen to overlook their deficiencies. Were our rewards to be bestowed only on what is intrinsically meritorious, merit alone would have any apology for appearing before the public. The poetical adventurer should be taught that it is only the productions of genius, taste, and diligence that can find favor at the bar of criticism—that his writings are not to be applauded merely because they are written by an American, and are not decidedly bad, and that he must produce some more satisfactory evidence of his claim to celebrity than an extract from the parish register. To show him what we expect of him, it is as necessary to point out the faults of his predecessors, as to commend their excellencies. He must be taught, as well what to avoid, as what to imitate. This is the only way of diffusing and preserving a pure taste, both among those who read and those who write, and, in our opinion, the only way of affording merit a proper and effectual encouragement.

It must, however, be allowed that the poetry of the United States, though it has not reached that perfection to which some other countries have carried theirs, is yet even better than we could have been expected to produce, considering that our nation has scarcely seen two centuries since the first of its founders erected

their cabins on its soil, that our literary institutions are yet in their infancy, and that our citizens are just beginning to find leisure to attend to intellectual refinement and indulge in intellectual luxury, and the means of rewarding intellectual excellence. For the first century after the settlement of this country, the few quaint and unskilful specimens of poetry which yet remain to us are looked upon merely as objects of curiosity, are preserved only in the cabinet of the antiquary, and give little pleasure, if read without reference to the age and people which produced them.

But previous to the contest which terminated in the independence of the United States, we can hardly be said to have had any national poetry. Literary ambition was not then frequent amongst us—there was little motive for it, and few rewards. We were contented with considering ourselves as participating in the literary fame of that nation of which we were a part, and of which many of us were natives, and aspired to no separate distinction. And indeed we might well lay an equal claim, with those who remained on the British soil, to whatever glory the genius and learning as well as the virtue and bravery of other times reflected on the British name. These were qualities which ennobled our common ancestors, and though their graves were not with us, and we were at a distance from the scenes and haunts which were hallowed by their deeds, their studies, and their contemplations, yet we brought with us and preserved all the more valuable gifts which they left to their posterity and to mankind—their illumination—their piety—their spirit of liberty—reverence for their memory and example and all the proud tokens of a generous descent.

Yet here was no theater for the display of literary talent—the worshippers of fame could find no altars erected to that divinity in America, and he who would live by his pen must seek patronage in the parent country. Some men of taste and learning amongst us might occasionally amuse their leisure with poetical trifles, but a country struggling with the difficulties of colonization, and possessing no superfluous wealth, wanted any other class of men rather than poets. Accordingly we find

the specimens of American poetry, before this period, mostly desultory and occasional—rare and delicate exotics, cultivated only by the curious.

On our becoming an independent empire, a different spirit began to manifest itself, and the general ambition to distinguish ourselves as a nation was not without its effect on our literature. It seems to us, that it is from this time only that we can be said to have poets of our own, and from this period it is that we must date the origin of American poetry. About this time flourished Francis Hopkinson, whose humorous ballad, entitled "The Battle of the Kegs," is in most of our memories, and some of whose attempts, though deficient in vigor, are not inelegant. The keen and forcible invectives of Dr Church, which are still recollected by his contemporaries, received an additional edge and sharpness from the exasperated feelings of the times. A writer in verse of inferior note was Philip Freneau, whose pen seems to have been chiefly employed on political subjects, and whose occasional productions, distinguished by a coarse strength of sarcasm, and abounding with allusions to passing events, which is perhaps their greatest merit, attracted in their time considerable notice, and in the year 1786 were collected into a volume. But the influence of that principle which awoke and animated the exertions of all who participated in the political enthusiasm of that time, was still more strongly exemplified in the Connecticut poets—Trumbull, Dwight, Barlow, Humphreys, and Hopkins—who began to write about this period. In all the productions of these authors there is a pervading spirit of *nationality* and patriotism—a desire to reflect credit on the country to which they belonged, which seems, as much as individual ambition, to have prompted their efforts, and which at times gives a certain glow and interest to their manner . . .

One material error of taste pervades the graver productions of these authors, into which it should seem they were led by copying certain of the poets of England, who flourished near the period in which they began to write. It was their highest ambition to attain a certain lofty, measured, declamatory manner—an

artificial elevation of style, from which it is impossible to rise or descend without abruptness and violence, and which allows just as much play and freedom to the faculties of the writer as a pair of slits allows the body. The imagination is confined to one trodden circle, doomed to the chains of a perpetual mannerism, and condemned to tinkle the same eternal tune with its fetters. Their versification, though not equally exceptionable in all, is formed upon the same stately model of balanced and wearisome regularity. Another fault, which arises naturally enough out of the peculiar style which we have imputed to these poets, is the want of pathos and feeling in their writings—the heart is rarely addressed, and never with much power or success. Amidst this coldness of manner, sameness of imagery, and monotony of versification, the reader lays down his book, dazzled and fatigued.

With respect to the prevailing style of poetry at the present day in our country, we apprehend that it will be found, in too many instances, tinged with a sickly and affected imitation of the peculiar manner of some of the late popular poets of England. We speak not of a disposition to enumerate whatever is beautiful and excellent in their writings,—still less would we be understood as intending to censure that sort of imitation which, exploring all the treasures of English poetry, culls from all a diction that shall form a natural and becoming dress for the conceptions of the writer,—this is a course of preparation which every one ought to go through before he appears before the public—but we desire to set a mark on that servile habit of copying, which adopts the vocabulary of some favorite author, and apes the fashion of his sentences, and cramps and forces the ideas into a shape, which they would not naturally have taken, and of which the only recommendation is, not that it is most elegant or most striking, but that it bears some resemblance to the manner of him who is proposed as a model. Thus way of writing has an air of poverty and meanness—it seems to indicate a paucity of reading as well as perversion of taste—it might almost lead us to suspect that the writer had but one or two examples of poetical composition in his hands, and was

afraid of expressing himself, except according to some formula which they might contain—and it ever has been and ever will be the resort of those who are sensible that their works need some factitious recommendation to give them even a temporary popularity.

We have now given a brief summary of what we conceived to be the characteristic merits and defects of our most celebrated American poets. Some names, of which we are not at present aware, equally deserving of notice with those whom we have mentioned, may have been omitted—some we have passed over, because we would not willingly disturb their passage to that oblivion, towards which, to the honor of our country, they are hastening—and some elegant productions of later date we have not commented on, because we were unwilling to tire our readers with a discussion which they may think already exhausted.

On the whole there seems to be more good taste among those who read, than those who write poetry in our country. With respect to the poets whom we have enumerated and whose merits we have discussed, we think the judgment pronounced on their works by the public will be found, generally speaking, just. They hold that station in our literature to which they are entitled, and could hardly be admired more than they are without danger to the taste of the nation. We know of no instance in which great poetical merit has come forward, and finding its claims unallowed, been obliged to retire to the shade from which it emerged. Whenever splendid talents of this description shall appear, we believe that there will be found a disposition to encourage and reward them. The fondness for literature is fast increasing in our country—and if this were not the case, the patrons of literature have multiplied, of course, and will continue to multiply with the mere growth of our population. The popular English works of the day are reprinted in our country—they are dispersed all over the union—they are to be found in everybody's hands—they are made the subject of everybody's conversation. What should hinder our native works, if equal in merit, from meeting an equally favorable reception? . . .

## From THE RIGHT OF WORKMEN TO STRIKE

As editor of the *New York Evening Post*, Bryant won respect, and also hostility, for his courage and honesty in dealing with social and political issues at home and abroad. Readers who were surprised at vigorous and militant editorials from the pen of the nation's best known poet failed to estimate properly the romantic humanitarian impulsiveness which here found freer and more immediate play than in his more restrained utterances in verse. His defense a century ago of a group of New York tailors, heavily fined for forming a union and striking, was denounced as dangerous and radical.

SENTENCE was passed on Saturday on the twenty "men who had determined not to work." The punishment selected, on due consideration, by the judge was that officers appointed for the purpose should immediately demand from each of the delinquents a sum of money which was named in the sentence of the court. The amount demanded would not have fallen short of the savings of many years. Either the offenders had not parted with these savings, or their brother workmen raised the ransom money for them on the spot. The fine was paid over as required. All is now well, justice has been satisfied. But if the expenses of their families had anticipated the law and left nothing in their hands, or if friends had not been ready to buy the freedom of their comrades, they would have been sent to prison, and there they would have stayed until their wives and children, besides earning their own bread, had saved enough to redeem the captives from their cells. Such has been their punishment. What was their offense? They had committed the crime of unanimously declining to go to work at the wages offered to them by their masters. They had said to one another, "Let us come out from the meanness and misery of our caste. Let us begin to do what every order more privileged and more honored is doing every day. By the means which we believe to be the best, let us raise ourselves and our families above the humbleness of our condition. We may be wrong, but we cannot help believing that we might do much if we were true brothers to each other, and would resolve not to sell the only thing

which is our own, the cunning of our hands, for less than it is worth" What other things they may have done is nothing to the purpose it was for thus they were condemned, it is for thus they are to endure the penalty of the law

We call upon a candid and generous community to mark that the punishment inflicted upon these twenty "men who had determined not to work" is not directed against the offense of conspiring to prevent others by force from working at low wages, but expressly against the offense of settling by pre-concert the compensation which they thought they were entitled to obtain. It is certainly superfluous to repeat that this journal would be the very last to oppose a law levelled at any attempt to molest the laborer who chooses to work for less than the prices settled by the union. We have said, and to cut off cavil we say it now again, that a conspiracy to deter, by threats of violence, a fellow workman from arranging his own terms with his employers is a conspiracy to commit a felony—a conspiracy which, being a crime against liberty, we should be the first to condemn, a conspiracy which no strike should, for its own sake, countenance for a moment, a conspiracy already punishable by the statute and far easier to reach than the one of which "the twenty" stood accused, but a conspiracy, we must add, that has not a single feature in common with the base and barbarous prohibition under which the offenders were indicted and condemned.

They were condemned because they had determined not to work for the wages that were offered them! Can anything be imagined more abhorrent to every sentiment of generosity or justice than the law which arms the rich with the legal right to fix, by assize, the wages of the poor? If this is not SLAVERY, we have forgotten its definition. Strike the right of associating for the sale of labor from the privileges of a freeman, and you may as well at once bind him to a master, or ascribe him to the soil. If it be not in the color of his skin, and in the poor franchise of naming his own terms in a contract for his work, what advantage has the laborer of the North over the

bondman of the South? Punish by human laws a "determination not to work," make it penal by any other penalty than idleness inflicts; and it matters little whether the taskmasters be one or many, an individual or an order, the hateful scheme of slavery will have gained a foothold in the land. And then the meanness of this law, which visits with its malice those who cling to it for protection, and shelters with all its fences those who are raised above its threats! A late solicitation for its aid against employers is treated with denision and contempt, but the moment the "masters" invoked its intervention, it came down from its high place with most indecent haste, and has now discharged its fury upon the naked heads of wretches so forlorn that their worst faults multiply their titles to a liberty which they must learn to win from livelier sensibilities than the barren benevolence of wealth or the tardy magnanimity of power.

"Self-created societies," says Judge Edwards, "are unknown to the constitution and laws, and will not be permitted to rear their crest and extend their baneful influence over any portion of the community" If there is any sense in this passage, it means that self-created societies are unlawful, and must be put down by the courts. Down then with every literary, every religious, and every charitable association not incorporated! What nonsense is this! Self-created societies *are* known to the constitution and laws, for they are not prohibited, and the laws which allow them will, if justly administered, protect them. But suppose in charity that the reporter has put this absurdity into the mouth of Judge Edwards, and that he meant only those self-created societies which have an effect upon trade and commerce. Gather up then and sweep to the penitentiary all those who are confederated to carry on any business or trade in concert by fixed rules, see how many men you would leave at large in this city. The members of every partnership in the place will come under the penalties of the law, and not only these but every person pursuing any occupation whatever who governs himself by a mutual understanding with others that follow the same occupation. . .

1795 ~ *Joseph Rodman Drake* ~ 1820

**D**R. DRAKE, a native of New York City, spent his boyhood, after his father's early death, with relatives on their estates on the East River, the partial background for his best poem, "The Culprit Fay." In 1818, while studying medicine, he met Fitz-Greene Halleck, his later partner in the literary "firm" of "Croaker and Company," Drake being "Croaker, Sr." In 1816 he received his medical degree and married. After a tour in Europe with his wife, he entered a druggist partnership in New York but died in the following year. From March 10 to July 24, 1819, in collaboration with Halleck, "Croaker, Jr.," he published a number of clever satirical poems in the *New York Evening Post*. With these was the stirring "The American Flag," of which Halleck wrote the last stanza.

"The Culprit Fay," said to have been written in three days in the year of his graduation, was first published by his daughter in 1835, in *The Culprit Fay and Other Poems*. It was a *tour de force*, written to demonstrate that American as well as English river scenery could be effectively used as a setting for fanciful poetry. Abruptly concluded and never revised for publication, it shows considerable facility, an active imagination, and real acquaintance with the scenery and with the animal and plant life of the Hudson.

See F. L. Pleadwell, *Life and Works of Joseph Rodman Drake*, containing a memoir and complete text of his poems and prose (1935). The *DAB* article by A. H. Bouton adds new material from Drake's descendants. V. H. Paltsits has compiled a good bibliography in *Translations of the Bronx Society of Arts and Sciences*, I, Part IV (1919), another is included in *CHAL*, I (1917). Contemporary criticisms of his one published volume, *The Culprit Fay and Other Poems* (1835), are those by N. P. Willis, *Athenaeum* (London, Jan. and Feb., 1835), and by Poe, *Southern Literary Messenger* (April, 1836). Duyckinck's *Cyclopedia of American Literature* reprints several of the "Croaker" poems.

## THE CULPRIT FAY

"My visual orbs are purged from film, and lo!  
Instead of Anster's turnip-bearing vales  
I see old fairy land's miraculous show!  
Her trees of tinsel kissed by freakish gales,  
Her Ouphs that, cloaked in leaf-gold, skim the  
breeze,  
And fairies, swarming "

TENNANT'S *Anster Fair*

1

'Tis the middle watch of a summer night—  
The earth is dark, but the heavens are bright,

Naught is seen in the vault on high  
But the moon, and the stars, and the cloudless  
sky,  
And the flood which rolls its milky hue,  
A river of light on the welkin blue  
The moon looks down on old Cronest,  
She mellowes the shades on his shaggy breast,  
And seems his huge gray form to throw  
In a silver cone on the wave below, 10  
His sides are broken by spots of shade,  
By the walnut bough and the cedar made,  
And through their clustering branches dark  
Glimmers and dies the firefly's spark—



Like starry twinkles that momentarily break  
Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's  
rack.

## II

The stars are on the moving stream,  
And fling, as its ripples gently flow,  
A burnished length of wavy beam  
In an eel-like, spiral line below, 20  
The winds are whist, and the owl is still,  
The bat in the shelvy rock is hid,  
And naught is heard on the lonely hill  
But the cricket's chirp, and the answer shrill  
Of the gauze-winged kairydid,  
And the plaint of the wailing whippoorwill,  
Who moans unseen, and ceaseless sings,  
Ever a note of wail and woe,  
Till morning spreads her rosy wings,  
And earth and sky in her glances glow 30

## III

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell,  
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well,  
He has counted them all with click and stroke  
Deep in the heart of the mountain-oak,  
And he has awakened the sentry elfe  
Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,  
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,  
And call the fays to their revelry,  
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—  
('Twas made of the white snail's pearly  
shell), 40  
"Midnight comes, and all is well"  
Hither, hither, wing your way!  
"Tis the dawn of the fairy day "

## IV

They come from beds of lichen green,  
They creep from the mullen's velvet screen,  
Some on the backs of beetles fly  
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,  
Where they swung in their cobweb ham-  
mocks hight,  
And rocked about in the evening breeze,  
Some from the hum bird's downy nest— 50  
They had driven him out by elfin power—  
And, pillowed on plumes of his rainbow  
breast,  
Had slumbered there till the charmed hour;  
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock  
With glittering ising-stars inlaid,

And some had opened the four-o'clock  
And stole within its purple shade  
And now they throng the moonlight glade,  
Above—below—on every side,  
Their little manum forms arrayed 60  
In the tricky pomp of fairy pridel

## V

They come not now to print the lea,  
In freak and dance around the tree,  
Or at the mushroom board to sup,  
And drink the dew from the buttercup,—  
A scene of sorrow awaits them now,  
For an Ouphe has broken his vestal vow;  
He has loved an earthly maid,  
And left for her his woodland shade,  
He has lain upon her lip of dew, 70  
And sunned him in her eye of blue  
Fanned her cheek with his wing of air,  
Played in the ringlets of her hair,  
And, nestling on her snowy breast,  
Forgot the lily-king's behest  
For thus the shadowy tribes of air  
To the elfin court must haste away—  
And now they stand expectant there,  
To hear the doom of the culprit Fay

## VI

The throne was reared upon the grass, 80  
Of spice-wood and the sassafras,  
On pillars of mottled tortoise-shell  
Hung the burnished canopy—  
And over it gorgeous curtains fell  
Of the tulip's crimson drapery  
The monarch sat on his judgment-seat,  
On his brow the crown imperial shone  
The prisoner Fay was at his feet,  
And his peers were ranged around the  
throne.  
He waved his scepter in the air, 90  
He looked around and calmly spoke,  
His brow was grave and his eye severe,  
But his voice in a softened accent broke—

## VII

"Fairy! Fairy list and mark.  
Thou hast broke thine elfin chain,  
Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark,  
And thy wings are dyed with a deadly  
stain—

Thou hast sullied thine elfin purity  
 In the glance of a mortal maiden's eye,  
 Thou hast scorned our dread decree, 100  
 And thou shouldst pay the forfeit high.  
 But well I know her sinless mind  
 Is pure as the angel forms above,  
 Gentle and meek, and chaste and kind,  
 Such as a spirit well might love;  
 Fairy! had she spot or taint,  
 Bitter had been thy punishment—  
 Tied to hornet's shardy wings,  
 Tossed on the pricks of nettle's stings,  
 Or seven long ages doomed to dwell 110  
 With the lazy worm in the walnut shell;  
 Or every night to writhe and bleed  
 Beneath the tread of the centipede,  
 Or bound in a cobweb dungeon dim,  
 Your jailer a spider huge and grim,  
 Amid the carrion bodies to lie,  
 Of the worm, and the bug, and the murdered  
 fly:  
 These had been your lot to bear,  
 Had a stain been found on the earthly fair.  
 Now list, and mark our mild decree— 120  
 Fairy, this your doom must be:

## VIII

"Thou shalt seek the beach of sand  
 Where the water bounds the elfin land,  
 Thou shalt watch the oozy brine  
 Till the sturgeon leaps in the bright moon-  
 shine.  
 Then dart the glistening arch below,  
 And catch a drop from his silver bow.  
 The water sprites will wield their arms  
 And dash around, with roar and rave,  
 And vain are the woodland spirits' charms, 130  
 They are the imps that rule the wave.  
 Yet trust thee in thy single might:  
 If thy heart be pure and thy spirit right,  
 Thou shalt win the warlock fight.

## IX

"If the spray-bead gem be won,  
 The stain of thy wing is washed away:  
 But another errand must be done  
 Ere thy crime be lost for aye;  
 Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark,  
 Thou must reillumine its spark. 140  
 Mount thy steed and spur him high  
 To the heaven's blue canopy;

And when thou see'st a shooting star,  
 Follow it fast, and follow it far,—  
 The last faint spark of its burning train  
 Shall light the elfin lamp again.  
 Thou hast heard our sentence, Fay;  
 Hencel to the waterside, away!"

## X

The goblin marked his monarch well;  
 He spake not, but he bowed him low, 150  
 Then plucked a crimson colen-bell,  
 And turned him round in act to go.  
 The way is long, he cannot fly,  
 His soiled wing has lost its power,  
 And he winds adown the mountain high,  
 For many a sore and weary hour.  
 Through dreary beds of tangled fern,  
 Through groves of nightshade dark and dorn,  
 Over the grass and through the brake,  
 Where toils the ant and sleeps the snake; 160  
 Now over the violet's azure flush  
 He skips along in lightsome mood,  
 And now he thrids the bramble-bush,  
 Till its points are dyed in fairy blood.  
 He has leaped the bog, he has pierced the  
 brier,  
 He has swum the brook, and waded the mire,  
 Till his spirits sank, and his limbs grew weak,  
 And the red waxed fainter in his cheek  
 He had fallen to the ground outright,  
 For rugged and dim was his onward  
 track, 170  
 But there came a spotted toad in sight,  
 And he laughed as he jumped upon her  
 back.  
 He bridled her mouth with a silkweed twist,  
 He lashed her sides with an osier thong;  
 And now, through evening's dewy mist,  
 With leap and spring they bound along,  
 Till the mountain's magic verge is past,  
 And the beach of sand is reached at last

## XI

Soft and pale is the moony beam,  
 Moveless still the glassy stream, 180  
 The wave is clear, the beach is bright  
 With snowy shells and sparkling stones;  
 The shore-surge comes in ripples light,  
 In murmurings faint, and distant moans,  
 And ever afar in the silence, deep  
 Is heard the splash of the sturgeon's leap,

And the bend of his graceful bow is seen—  
A glittering arch of silver sheen,  
Spanning the wave of burnished blue, (   
And dripping with gems of the river dew. 190

## XII

The elfin cast a glance around,  
As he lighted down from his courser road,  
Then round his breast his wings he wound,  
And close to the river's brink he strode;  
He sprang on a rock, he breathed a prayer,  
Above his head his arms he threw,  
Then tossed a tiny curve in air,  
And headlong plunged in the waters blue.

## XIII

Up sprung the spirits of the waves,  
From the sea-silk beds in their coral caves,  
With snail-plate armor snatched in haste, 201  
They speed their way through the liquid  
waste;  
Some are rapidly borne along  
On the mailed shrimp or the prickly prong,  
Some on blood-red leeches glide,  
Some on the stony starfish ride,  
Some on the back of the lancing squab,  
Some on the sidelong soldier crab,  
And some on the jellied quail, that flings  
At once a thousand streamy stings, 210  
They cut the wave with the living oar,  
And hurry on to the moonlight shore,  
To guard their realms and chase away  
The footsteps of the invading Fay.

## XIV

Fearlessly he skims along,  
His hope is high, and his limbs are strong,  
He spreads his arms like the swallow's wing,  
And throws his feet with a frog-like fling,  
His locks of gold on the waters shine,  
At his breast the nny foam-beads rise, 220  
His back gleams bright above the brine,  
And the wake-line foam behind him lies,  
But the water-sprites are gathering near  
To check his course along the tide,  
Their warriors come in swift career  
And hem him round on every side,  
On his thigh the leech has fixed his hold,  
The quail's long arms are round him rolled,  
The prickly prong has pierced his skin,  
And the squab has thrown his javelin, 230

The gritty star has rubbed him raw,  
And the crab has struck with his giant claw,  
He howls with rage, and he shrieks with pain,  
He strikes around, but his blows are vain;  
Hopeless is the unequal fight,  
Fairy! naught is left but flight.

## XV

He turned him round, and fled amain  
With hurry and dash to the beach again.  
He twisted over from side to side,  
And laid his cheek to the cleaving tide, 240  
The strokes of his plunging arms are fleet,  
And with all his might he flings his feet,  
But the water-sprites are round him still,  
To cross his path and work him ill.  
They bade the wave before him rise;  
They flung the sea-fire in his eyes,  
And they stunned his ears with the scallop-  
stroke,  
With the porpoise heave and the drumfish  
croak.  
Oh! but a weary wight was he  
When he reached the foot of the dogwood  
tree. 250  
Gashed and wounded, and stiff and sore,  
He laid him down on the sandy shore,  
He blessed the force of the charmed line,  
And he banned the water-goblin's spite,  
For he saw around in the sweet moonshine  
Their little wee faces above the brine,  
Giggling and laughing with all their might  
At the piteous hap of the Fairy wight.

## XVI

Soon he gathered the balsam dew  
From the sorrel leaf and the henbane bud,  
Over each wound the balm he drew, 261  
And with cobweb lint he stanch'd the  
blood.  
The mild west wind was soft and low,  
It cooled the heat of his burning brow,  
And he felt new life in his sinews shoot,  
As he drank the juice of the calamus root;  
And now he treads the fatal shore,  
As fresh and vigorous as before.

## XVII

Wrapped in musing stands the sprite;  
'Tis the middle wane of night; 270  
His task is hard, his way is far,

But he must do his errand right  
 Ere dawning mounts her beamy car,  
 And rolls her chariot wheels of light;  
 And van are spells of fairy land—  
 He must work with a human hand.

## XVIII

He cast a saddened look around,  
 But he felt new joy his bosom swell,  
 When, glittering on the shadowed ground,  
 He saw a purple mussel-shell, 280  
 Thither he ran, and he bent him low,  
 He heaved at the stern and he heaved at the bow,  
 And he pushed her over the yielding sand,  
 Till he came to the verge of the haunted land  
 She was as lovely a pleasure boat  
 As ever fairy had paddled in,  
 For she glowed with purple paint without,  
 And shone with silvery pearl within,  
 A sculler's notch in the stern he made,  
 An oar he shaped of the bootle blade, 290  
 Then sprung to his seat with a lightsome leap,  
 And launched afar, on the calm, blue deep

## XIX

The imps of the river yell and rave;  
 They had no power above the wave,  
 But they heaved the billow before the prow,  
 And they dashed the surge against her side,  
 And they struck her keel with jerk and blow,  
 Till the gunwale bent to the rocking tide  
 She wimpled about to the pale moonbeam,  
 Like a feather that floats on a wind-tossed  
 stream, 300

And momentarily athwart her track  
 The quail upreared his island back,  
 And the fluttering scallop behind would float,  
 And patter the water about the boat,  
 But he bailed her out with his colen-bell,  
 And he kept her trimmed with a wary tread,  
 While on every side like lightning fell  
 The heavy strokes of his bootle blade.

## XX

Onward still he held his way,  
 Till he came where the column of moonshine  
 lay, 310  
 And saw beneath the surface dim  
 The brown-backed sturgeon slowly swim;  
 Around him were the goblin train—  
 But he sculled with all his might and main,

And followed wherever the sturgeon led,  
 Till he saw him upward point his head;  
 Then he dropped his paddle blade,  
 And held his colen-goblet up  
 To catch the drop in its crimson cup.

## XXI

With sweeping tail and quivering fin, 320  
 Through the wave the sturgeon flew,  
 And, like the heaven-shot javelin.  
 He sprung above the waters blue.  
 Instant as the star-fall light  
 He plunged him in the deep again,  
 But left an arch of silver bright,  
 The rainbow of the moony main.  
 It was a strange and lovely sight  
 To see the puny goblin there,  
 He seemed an angel form of light, 330  
 With azure wing and sunny hair,  
 Throned on a cloud of purple fair,  
 Circled with blue and edged with white,  
 And sitting at the fall of even  
 Beneath the bow of summer heaven.

## XXII

A moment, and its luster fell,  
 But ere it met the billow blue,  
 He caught within his crimson bell  
 A droplet of its sparkling dew—  
 Joy to thee, Fay! thy task is done, 340  
 Thy wings are pure, for the gem is won—  
 Cheerly ply thy dripping oar,  
 And haste away to the elfin shore.

## XXIII

He turns, and lol on either side  
 The ripples on his path divide,  
 And the track o'er which his boat must pass  
 Is smooth as a sheet of polished glass,  
 Around, their limbs the sea-nymphs lave,  
 With snowy arms half swelling out,  
 While on the glossed and gleamy wave 350  
 Their sea-green ringlets loosely float,  
 They swim around with smile and song;  
 They press the bark with pearly hand,  
 And gently urge her course along,  
 Toward the beach of speckled sand;  
 And, as he lightly leaped to land,  
 They bade adieu with nod and bow,  
 Then gaily kissed each little hand,  
 And dropped in the crystal deep below.

## XXIV

A moment stayed the fairy there; 360  
 He kissed the beach and breathed a prayer;  
 Then spread his wings of gilded blue,  
 And on to the elfin court he flew;  
 As ever ye saw a bubble rise,  
 And shone with a thousand changing dyes,  
 Till, lessening far, through ether driven,  
 It mingles with the hues of heaven;  
 As, at the glimpse of morning pale,  
 The lance-fly spreads his silken sail,  
 And gleams with blendings soft and bright,  
 Till lost in the shades of fading night; 371  
 So rose from earth the lovely Fay—  
 So vanished, far in heaven away

Up, Fairy! quit thy chuckweed bower,  
 The cricket has called the second hour,  
 Twice again, and the lark will rise  
 To kiss the streaking of the skies—  
 Upl thy charmed armor don,  
 Thou'lt need it ere the night be gone.

## XXV

He put his acorn helmet on; 380  
 It was plumed of the silk of the thistle-down;  
 The corselet plate that guarded his breast  
 Was once the wild bee's golden vest,  
 His cloak, of a thousand mingled dyes,  
 Was formed of the wings of butterflies;  
 His shield was the shell of a ladybug queen,  
 Studs of gold on a ground of green,  
 And the quivering lance which he brandished  
 bright  
 Was the sting of a wasp he had slain in fight.  
 Swift he bestrode his firefly steed, 390  
 He bared his blade of the bent grass blue,  
 He drove his spurs of the cockle-seed,  
 And away like a glance of thought he flew,  
 To skim the heavens, and follow far  
 The fiery trail of the rocket-star.

## XXVI

The moth-fly, as he shot in air,  
 Crept under the leaf, and hid her there;  
 The katydid forgot its lay,  
 The prowling gnat fled fast away;  
 The fell mosquito checked his drone 400  
 And folded his wings till the Fay was gone;  
 And the wily beetle dropped his head,  
 And fell on the ground as if he were dead;

They crouched them close in the darkness  
 shade,

They quaked all o'er with awe and fear,  
 For they had felt the blue-bent blade,  
 And writhed at the prick of the elfin spear.  
 Many a time on a summer's night,  
 When the sky was clear and the moon was

bright,  
 They had been roused from the haunted  
 ground 410

By the yelp and bay of the fairy-hound;  
 They had heard the tiny bugle-horn,  
 They had heard the twang of the maize-  
 silk string

When the vine-twig bows were tightly  
 drawn,

And the needle-shaft through air was borne,  
 Feathered with down of the hum-bird's  
 wing.

And now they deemed the courier Ouphe,  
 Some hunter-sprite of the elfin ground,  
 And they watched till they saw him mount  
 the roof

That canopies the world around, 420  
 Then glad they left their covert lair,  
 And freaked about in the midnight air.

## XXVII

Up to the vaulted firmament  
 His path the firefly courser bent,  
 And at every gallop on the wind,  
 He flung a glittering spark behind;  
 He flies like a feather in the blast  
 Till the first light cloud in heaven is past  
 But the shapes of air have begun their work,  
 And a drizzly mist is round him cast, 430  
 He cannot see through the mantle murk,  
 He shivers with cold but he urges fast;  
 Through storm and darkness, sleet and  
 shade,  
 He lashes his steed and spurs amain,  
 For shadowy hands have twitched the rein,  
 And flame-shot tongues around him played,  
 And near him many a fiendish eye  
 Glared with a fell malignity,  
 And yells of rage, and shrieks of fear,  
 Came screaming on his startled ear. 440

## XXVIII

His wings are wet around his breast,  
 The plume hangs dripping from his crest,

His eyes are blurred with the lightning's  
glare,  
And his ears are stunned with the thunder's  
blare,  
But he gave a shout, and his blade he drew,  
He thrust before and he struck behind,  
Till he pierced their cloudy bodies through,  
And gashed their shadowy limbs of wind;  
Howling the misty specters flew,  
They rend the air with frightful cries, 450  
For he has gained the welkin blue,  
And the land of clouds beneath him lies.

## XXIX

Up to the cope careering swift,  
In breathless motion fast,  
Fleet as the swallow cuts the drift,  
Or the sea-roc rides the blast,  
The sapphire sheet of eve is shot,  
The spherèd moon is past,  
The earth but seems a tiny blot  
On a sheet of azure cast. 460  
Oh! it was sweet, in the clear moonlight,  
To tread the starry plain of even,  
To meet the thousand eyes of night,  
And feel the cooling breath of heaven!  
But the elfin made no stop or stay  
Till he came to the bank of the milky-way  
Then he checked his courser's foot,  
And watched for the glumpse of the planet-  
shoot.

## XXX

Sudden along the snowy tide 469  
That swelled to meet their footsteps' fall;  
The sylphs of heaven were seen to glide,  
Attured in sunset's crimson pall,  
Around the Fay they weave the dance,  
They skip before him on the plain,  
And one has taken his wasp-sting lance,  
And one upholds his bridle rein,  
With warblings wild they lead him on  
To where, through clouds of amber seen,  
Studded with stars, resplendent shone  
The palace of the Sylphid queen. 480  
Its spiral columns, gleaming bright,  
Were streamers of the northern light;  
Its curtain's light and lovely flush  
Was of the morning's rosy blush;  
And the ceiling far that rose aboon,  
The white and feathery fleece of noon.

## XXXI

But, oh! how fair the shape that lay  
Beneath a rainbow bending bright;  
She seemed to the entranced Fay  
The loveliest of the forms of light; 490  
Her mantle was the purple rolled  
At twilight in the west afar;  
'Twas tied with threads of dawning gold,  
And buttoned with a sparkling star.  
Her face was like the hly roon  
That veils the vestal planet's hue;  
Her eyes, two beamlets from the moon,  
Set floating in the welkin blue.  
Her hair is like the sunny beam,  
And the diamond gems which round it gleam  
Are the pure drops of dewy even 501  
That ne'er have left their native heaven

## XXXII

She raised her eyes to the wondering sprite,  
And they leaped with smiles, for well I  
ween  
Never before in the bowers of light  
Had the form of an earthly Fay been seen.  
Long she looked in his tiny face;  
Long with his butterfly cloak she played;  
She smoothed his limbs of azure lace,  
And handled the tassel of his blade, 510  
And as he told in accents low  
The story of his love and woe,  
She felt new pains in her bosom rise;  
And the tear-drop started in her eyes.  
And "O sweet sprite of earth," she cried,  
"Return no more to your woodland height,  
But ever here with me abide  
In the land of everlasting light!  
Within the fleecy drift we'll lie,  
We'll hang upon the rainbow's rim; 520  
And all the jewels of the sky  
Around thy brow shall brightly beam!  
And thou shalt bathe thee in the stream  
That rolls its whitening foam aboon,  
And ride upon the lightning's gleam,  
And dance upon the orbèd moon!  
We'll sit within the Pleiad ring,  
We'll rest on Orion's starry belt,  
And I will bid my sylphs to sing  
The song that makes the dew-must melt; 530  
Their harps are of the amber shade,  
That hides the blush of waking day,

And every gleamy string is made  
Of silvery moonshine's lengthened ray;  
And thou shalt pillow on my breast,  
While heavenly breathings float around,  
And, with the sylphs of ether blest,  
Forget the joys of fairy ground."

## XXXIII

She was lovely and fair to see,  
And the elfin's heart beat fitfully; 540  
But lovelier far and still more fair,  
The earthly form unprinted there,  
Naught he saw in the heavens above  
Was half so dear as his mortal love,  
For he thought upon her looks so meek,  
And he thought of the light flush on her  
cheek;

Never again might he bask and lie  
On that sweet face and moonlight eye,  
But in his dreams her form to see,  
To clasp her in his revery; 550  
To think upon his virgin bride,  
Was worth all heaven, and earth beside.

## XXXIV

"Lady," he cried, "I have sworn tonight,  
On the word of a fairy knight,  
To do my sentence-task aright,  
My honor scarce is free from stain,  
I may not soil its snows again,  
Betide me weal, betide me woe,  
Its mandate must be answered now "  
Her bosom heaved with many a sigh, 560  
The tear was in her drooping eye,  
But she led him to the palace gate,

And called the sylphs who hovered there,  
And bade them fly and bring him straight  
Of clouds condensed a sable car.  
With charm and spell she blessed it there,  
From all the fiends of upper air;  
Then round him cast the shadowy shroud,  
And tied his steed behind the cloud,  
And pressed his hand as she bade him fly 570  
Far to the verge of the northern sky,  
For by his wan and wavering light  
There was a star would fall to-might.

## XXXV

Borne afar on the wings of the blast,  
Northward away he speeds him fast,  
And his courser follows the cloudy wain  
Till the hoof-strokes fall like pattering rain.

The clouds roll backward as he flies,  
Each flickering star behind him lies,  
And he has reached the northern plain, 580  
And backed his fiery steed again,  
Ready to follow in its flight  
The streaming of the rocket-light.

## XXXVI

The star is yet in the vault of heaven,  
But it rocks in the summer gale,  
And now 'tis fitful and uneven,  
And now 'tis deadly pale,  
And now 'tis wrapped in sulphur smoke,  
And quenched is its rayless beam,  
And now with a rattling thunder-stroke 590  
It bursts in flash and flame.

As swift as the glance of the arrowy lance,  
That the storm-spirit flings from hugh,  
The star-shot flew o'er the welkin blue,  
As it fell from the sheeted sky  
As swift as the wind in its trail behind  
The elfin gallops along.  
The fiends of the cloud are bellowing loud,  
But the sylphid charm is strong,  
He gallops unhurt in the shower of fire, 600  
While the cloud-fiends fly from the blaze,  
He watches each flake till its sparks expire,  
And rides in the light of its rays  
But he drove his steed to the lightning's speed,  
And caught a glimmering spark,  
Then wheeled around to the fairy ground,  
And sped through the midnight dark

\* \* \*

Ouphe and Goblin! Imp and Spritel  
Elf of evel and starry Fay!  
Ye that love the moon's soft light, 610  
Hither, hither wend your way;  
Twine ye in a jocund ring,  
Sing and trip it merrily,  
Hand to hand, and wing to wing,  
Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

Hail the wanderer again  
With dance and song, and lute and lyre,  
Pure his wing and strong his chain,  
And doubly bright his fairy fire.  
Twine ye in an airy round, 620  
Brush the dew and print the lea;  
Skip and gambol, hop and bound,  
Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

The beetle guards our holy ground,  
 He flies about the haunted place,  
 And if mortal there be found,  
 He hums in his ears and flaps his face;  
 The leaf-harp sounds our roundelay,  
 The owl's eyes our lanterns be,  
 Thus we sing, and dance, and play 630  
 Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

But hark! from tower on tree-top high,  
 The sentry-elf his call has made.  
 A streak is in the eastern sky,  
 Shapes of moonlight! fit and fadel  
 The hulltops gleam in morning's spring  
 The skylark shapes his dappled wing,  
 The day-glimpse glimmers on the lawn,  
 The cock has crowed, and the Fays are gone  
 1816 1835

## THE AMERICAN FLAG

WHEN Freedom from her mountain height  
 Unfurled her standard to the air,  
 She tore the azure robe of night,  
 And set the stars of glory there  
 She mingled with its gorgeous dyes  
 The milky baldric of the skies,  
 And striped its pure celestial white  
 With streakings of the morning light,  
 Then from his mansion in the sun  
 She called her eagle bearer down, 10  
 And gave into his mighty hand  
 The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud,  
 Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,  
 To hear the tempest trummings loud  
 And see the lightning lances driven,  
 When strive the warriors of the storm,  
 And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven,  
 Child of the sun! to thee 'us given  
 To guard the banner of the free, 20  
 To hover in the sulphur smoke,  
 To ward away the battle stroke,

And bid its blendings shune afar,  
 Like rainbows on the cloud of war,  
 The harbengers of victory!

Flag of the bravel thy folds shall fly,  
 The sign of hope and triumph high,  
 When speaks the signal trumpet tone,  
 And the long line comes gleaming on.  
 Ere yet the lifeblood, warm and wet, 30  
 Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,  
 Each soldier eye shall brightly turn  
 To where thy sky-born glories burn,  
 And, as his springing steps advance,  
 Catch war and vengeance from the glance.  
 And when the cannon-mouthings loud  
 Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,  
 And gory sabers rise and fall  
 Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,  
 Then shall thy meteor glances glow, 40  
 And cowering foes shall shrink beneath  
 Each gallant arm that strikes below  
 That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seal on ocean wave  
 Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;  
 When death, careering on the gale,  
 Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,  
 And fringed waves rush wildly back  
 Before the broadside's reeling rack,  
 Each dying wanderer of the sea 50  
 Shall look at once to heaven and thee,  
 And smile to see thy splendors fly  
 In triumph o'er his closing eye

Flag of the free heart's hope and homel  
 By angel hands to valor given,  
 Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,  
 And all thy hues were born in heaven  
 Forever float that standard sheet!  
 Where breathes the foe but falls before us,  
 With Freedom's soil beneath our feet, 60  
 And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us!  
 1819



1790 ~ *Fitz-Greene Halleck* ~ 1867

**H**ALLECK was born in Guilford, Connecticut, whence he went at twenty-one to New York to serve as a bank clerk for eighteen years, and later as a confidential clerk to John Jacob Astor for seventeen years more. These positions afforded leisure to cultivate his literary talents, study languages, and enjoy the literary society of the town. As "Croaker, Jr.," he contributed to the *Evening Post* in 1819 his share of the "Croaker Papers," "harmless pleasantries, luckily suited to the hour of their appearance." A devotee of Thomas Campbell and of Byron, whose works he edited in 1834, he published two popular long poems, *Fanny* (1819, expanded 1821) and *Alnwick Castle* (1827). Modest regarding his own abilities, he wrote little verse after 1828. In 1847 he edited his *Poetical Works*, including his best-known poems, the spirited "Marco Bozzaris," "Connecticut," "Red Jacket," and "Burns." In 1849 legacies enabled him to retire to his birthplace for a graceful old age, with frequent visits to his friends in New York.

Halleck had a particularly charming personality, which won him friends in all the circles of New York society which he touched. Although he went abroad only once, he knew Dickens, Thackeray, Lafayette, and other distinguished visitors in this country. As a poet, he recognized that his own gift was not great, although he was skilled in versifying.

In "Connecticut" he experimented successfully with the Don Juan stanza and Byron's artistic combination of passages of serious dignity leading up to mocking anticlimaxes. His graceful and restrained tribute to his friend Drake is probably his best poem, though "Marco Bozzaris," prompted by American sympathy with the Greek revolutionists, enjoyed a long and deserved popularity.

J. G. Wilson edited Halleck's *Poetical Writings* in 1869, and published his *Life and Letters* in the same year. An exhaustive critical biography is N. F. Adkins, *Fitz-Greene Halleck* (1930). The *DAB* article is by W. C. Bronson. For bibliography and a critical estimate, see *CHAL*, I (1917). Contemporary reviews are those by Poe, *Southern Literary Messenger* (April, 1836), G. P. Lathrop, *Atlantic Monthly* (June, 1877); Bayard Taylor, *North American Review* (July, 1877), and H. T. Tuckerman, *Lippincott's Magazine* (Feb., 1868).

ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPH  
RODMAN DRAKE

"The good die first,  
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust,  
Burn to the socket"

WORDSWORTH

GREEN be the turf above thee,  
Friend of my better days!  
None knew thee but to love thee,  
Nor named thee but to praise.  
Tears fell when thou wert dying,  
From eyes unused to weep,  
And long, where thou art lying,  
Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,  
Like thine, are laid in earth, 10  
There should a wreath be woven  
To tell the world their worth;

And I who woke each morrow  
To clasp thy hand in mine,  
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,  
Whose weal and woe were thine,

It should be mine to braid it  
Around thy faded brow,  
But I've in vain essayed it,  
And feel I cannot now 20

While memory bids me weep thee,  
Nor thoughts nor words are free,—  
The grief is fixed too deeply  
That mourns a man like thee.

1820

1821

## MARCO BOZZARIS

At midnight, in his guarded tent,  
The Turk was dreaming of the hour  
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,  
Should tremble at his power  
In dreams, through camp and court, he bore  
The trophies of a conqueror,  
In dreams his song of triumph heard,  
Then wore his monarch's signet ring  
Then pressed that monarch's throne—a king,  
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing, 10  
As Eden's garden bird

At midnight, in the forest shades,  
Bozzaris ranged his Sultane band,  
True as the steel of their tried blades,  
Heroes in heart and hand.  
There had the Persian's thousands stood,  
There had the glad earth drunk their blood  
On old Platæa's day,  
And now there breathed that haunted air  
The sons of sires who conquered there, 20  
With arm to strike and soul to dare,  
As quick, as far as they.

An hour passed on—the Turk awoke;  
That bright dream was his last,  
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,  
“To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!”

He woke—to die midst flame, and smoke,  
And shout, and groan, and saber stroke,  
And death shots falling thick and fast  
As lightnings from the mountain cloud; 30  
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,  
Bozzaris cheer his band:  
“Strike—till the last armed foe expires;  
Strike—for your altars and your fires;  
Strike—for the green graves of your sires;  
God—and your native land!”

They fought—like brave men, long and well;  
They piled that ground with Moslem slain,  
They conquered—but Bozzaris fell,  
Bleeding at every vein. 40  
His few surviving comrades saw  
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,  
And the red field was won;  
Then saw in death his eyelids close  
Calmly, as to a night's repose,  
Like flowers at set of sun.

Come to the bridal-chamber, Death!  
Come to the mother's, when she feels,  
For the first time, her first-born's breath,  
Come when the blessed seals 50  
That close the pestilence are broke,  
And crowded cities wail its stroke,  
Come in consumption's ghastly form,  
The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;  
Come when the heart bears high and warm  
With banquet song, and dance, and wine;  
And thou art terrible—the tear,  
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,  
And all we know, or dream, or fear  
Of agony, are thine 60

But to the hero, when his sword  
Has won the battle for the free,  
Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word;  
And in its hollow tones are heard  
The thanks of millions yet to be.  
Come, when his task of fame is wrought—  
Come, with her laurel leaf, blood-bought—  
Come in her crowning hour—and then  
Thy sunken eye's unearthly light 70  
To him is welcome as the sight  
Of sky and stars to prisoned men;  
Thy grasp is welcome as the hand  
Of brother in a foreign land,  
Thy summons welcome as the cry  
That told the Indian isles were nigh

To the world-seeking Genoese,  
When the land wind, from woods of palm,  
And orange groves, and fields of balm,  
Blew o'er the Haytian seas.

Bozzaris! with the storied brave 80  
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,  
Rest thee—there is no prouder grave,  
Even in her own proud clime.

She wore no funeral weeds for thee,  
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume  
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree  
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,  
The heartless luxury of the tomb,

But she remembers thee as one 90  
Long loved and for a season gone;  
For thee her poet's lyre is wreathed,  
Her marble wrought, her music breathed,  
For thee she rings the birthday bells,  
Of thee her babe's first lispings tells;  
For thine her evening prayer is said  
At palace couch and cottage bed;  
Her soldier, closing with the foe,  
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow,  
His plighted maiden, when she fears 100  
For him the joy of her young years,  
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears,

And she, the mother of thy boys,  
Though in her eye and faded cheek  
Is read the grief she will not speak,  
The memory of her buried joys,  
And even she who gave thee birth,  
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,  
Talk of thy doom without a sigh,  
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's  
One of the few, the immortal names, 110  
That were not born to die. 1825

#### From CONNECTICUT

"The woods in which we had dwelt pleasantly  
rustled their green leaves in the song, and our  
streams were there with the sound of all their  
waters."

MONTEZOME

I

STILL her gray rocks tower above the sea  
That crouches at their feet, a conquered wave,  
'Tis a rough land of earth, and stone, and tree,  
Where breathes no caged lord or cabined  
slave:

Where thoughts, and tongues, and hands are  
bold and free,  
And friends will find a welcome, foes a  
grave;  
And where none kneel, save when to Heaven  
they pray,  
Nor even then, unless in their own way.

II

Theirs is a pure republic, wild, yet strong,  
A "fierce democracie," where all are true 10  
To what themselves have voted—right or  
wrong—  
And to their laws denominated blue;  
(If red, they might to Draco's code belong;)  
A vestal state, which power could not sub-  
due,  
Nor promise win—like her own eagle's nest,  
Sacred—the San Marino of the West.

III

A justice of the peace, for the time being,  
They bow to, but may turn him out next  
year,  
They reverence their priest, but disagreeing  
In price or creed, dismiss him without fear;  
They have a natural talent for foreseeing 21  
And knowing all things, and should Park  
appear  
From his long tour in Africa, to show  
The Niger's source, they'd meet him with—  
"we know "

IV

They love their land, because it is their own,  
And scorn to give aught other reason why;  
Would shake hands with a king upon his  
throne,  
And think it kindness to his majesty,  
A stubborn race, fearing and flattering none  
Such are they nurtured, such they live and  
die, 30

All but a few apostates, who are meddling  
With merchandise, pounds, shillings, pence,  
and peddling;

V

Or wandering through the Southern countries  
teaching  
The A B C from Webster's spelling-book;  
Gallant and godly, making love and preaching,  
And gaming by what they call "hook or  
crook,"

And what the moralists call overreaching,  
A decent living. The Virgmians look  
Upon them with as favorable eyes  
As Gabriel on the devil in paradise.

40

## VI

But these are but their outcasts. View them  
near

At home, where all their worth and pride  
is placed,  
And there their hospitable fires burn clear,  
And there the lowliest farmhouse hearth is  
graced  
With manly hearts, in piety sincere,  
Faithful in love, in honor stern and chaste,  
In friendship warm and true, in danger brave,  
Beloved in life, and sainted in the grave

## VII

And minds have there been nurtured, whose  
control

Is felt even in their nation's destiny, 50  
Men who swayed senates with a statesman's  
soul,  
And looked on armies with a leader's eye,  
Names that adorn and dignify the scroll,  
Whose leaves contain their country's his-  
tory,  
And tales of love and war—listen to one  
Of the Green-Mountaineer—the Stark of  
Bennington.

## VIII

When on that field his band the Hessians  
fought,

Briefly he spoke before the fight began  
"Soldiers! those German gentlemen are bought  
For four pounds eight and seven pence  
per man, 60  
By England's king; a bargain, as is thought  
Are we worth more? Let's prove it now we  
can,

For we must beat them, boys, ere set of sun,  
*Or Mary Stark's a widow*" It was done

## XIII

They burnt their last witch in Connecticut  
About a century and a half ago;  
They made a schoolhouse of her forfeit hut,  
And gave a prying sweetbrier leave to grow  
Above her thankless ashes; and they put  
A certified description of the show, 70

Between two weeping-willows, craped with  
black,  
On the last page of that Year's almanac.

## XIV

Some warning and well-meant remarks were  
made

Upon the subject by the weekly printers;  
The people murmured at the taxes laid  
To pay for jurymen and pitch-pine splinters,  
And the sad story made the rose-leaf fade  
Upon young listeners' cheeks for several  
winters  
When told at fireside eves by those who saw  
Executed—the lady and the law. 80

## XXIII

And who were they, our fathers? In their  
veins

Ran the best blood of England's gentle-  
men  
Her bravest in the strife on battle-plains,  
Her wisest in the strife of voice and pen,  
Her holiest, teaching, in her holiest fanes,  
The lore that led to martyrdom; and when  
On this side ocean slept their wearied sails,  
And their toil-bells woke up our thousand  
hills and dales,

## XXIV

Shamed they their fathers? Ask the village-  
spires

Above their Sabbath-homes of praise and  
prayer, 90  
Ask of their children's happy household-fires,  
And happier harvest noons, ask summer's  
air,  
Made merry by young voices, when the wires  
Of their school-cages are unloosed, and dare  
Their slanderers' breath to blight the memory  
That o'er their graves is "growing green to  
see,"

## XXV

If he<sup>1</sup> has "writ their annals true"; if they  
The Christian-sponsored and the Christian-  
nursed,  
Clouted with crime the sunset of their day  
And warmed their winter's hearths with  
fires accursed; 100

<sup>1</sup> Cotton Mather

And if the stain that time wears not away  
 Of guilt was on the pilgrim axe that first  
 Our wood-paths' roses blest with smiles from  
 heaven,  
 In charity forget, and hope to be forgiven.

## XXVI

Forget their story's cruelty and wrong,  
 Forget their story-teller, or but deem  
 His facts the fictions of a minstrel's song,  
 The myths and marvels of a poet's dream  
 And are they not such? Suddenly among  
 My mind's dark thoughts its boyhood's  
 sunrise beam 110  
 Breathes in spring balm and beauty o'er my  
 page—  
 Joy! joy! my patriot wrath hath wronged the  
 reverend sage.

## XXXI

And our own Mather's fire-and-fagot tale  
 Of conquest, with her "garments rolled in  
 blood,"  
 And banners blackening, like a pirate's sail,  
 The Mayflower's memories of the brave  
 and good,  
 Though but a brain-born dream of rain and  
 hail,  
 And in his epic but an episode,  
 Proves mournfully the strange and sad ad-  
 mission  
 Of much sour grape-juice in his disposi-  
 tion. 120

## XXXII

O Genui! powerful with thy praise or  
 blame,  
 When art thou feigning? when art thou  
 sincere?  
 MATHER, who banned his living friends with  
 shame,  
 In funeral-sermons blessed them on their  
 bier,  
 And made their deathbeds beautiful with  
 fame—  
 Fame true and gracious as a widow's tear  
 To her departed darling husband given,  
 Him whom she scolded up from earth to  
 heaven.

## XXXIII

Thanks for his funeral-sermons; they recall  
 The sunshine smiling through his folio's  
 leaves, 130  
 That makes his readers' hours in bower of  
 hall  
 Joyous as plighted hearts on bridal eyes,  
 Chasing, like music from the soul of Saul,  
 The doubt that darkens, and the ill that  
 greaves;  
 And honoring the author's heart and mind,  
 That beats to bless, and toils to ennoble human  
 kind.

## XXXIV

His chaplain-mantle worthily to wear,  
 He fringed its sober gray with poet-bays,  
 And versed the Psalms of David to the air  
 Of "Yankee Doodle," for Thanksgiving  
 days, 140  
 Thus hallowing with the earnestness of prayer,  
 And patriotic purity of praise,  
 Unconscious of irreverence or wrong,  
 Our manliest battle-tune and merriest bridal  
 song.

## XXXV

The good the Rhine-song does to German  
 hearts,  
 Or thine, Marseilles! to France's fiery blood,  
 The good thy anthemed harmony imparts,  
 "God, save the Queen!" to England's field  
 and flood,  
 A home-born blessing, Nature's boon, not  
 Art's,  
 The same heart-cheering, spirit-warming  
 good, 150  
 To us and ours, where'er we war or woo,  
 Thy words and music, "Yankee Doodle,"  
 do!

## XXXVI

Beneath thy Star, as one of the Thirteen,  
 Land of my lay! through many a battle-  
 night  
 Thy gallant men stepped steady and serene,  
 To that war-music's stern and strong de-  
 light.  
 Where bayonets clinched above the trampled  
 green,  
 Where sabers grappled in the ocean-fight;

In siege, in storm, on deck or rampart, there  
They hunted the wolf Danger to his lair, 160  
And sought and won sweet Peace, and wreaths  
for Honor's hair

## XXXVII

And with thy smiles, sweet Peace, came  
woman's, bringing  
The Eden-sunshine of her welcome kiss,  
And lovers' flutes, and children's voices  
singing

The maiden's promised, matron's perfect  
bliss,  
And heart and home-bells blending with their  
ringing  
Thank-offerings borne to holier worlds than  
this,  
And the proud green of Glory's laurel-  
leaves,  
And gold, the gift to Peace, of Plenty's sum-  
mer sheaves.

1826

## Minor Lyrists

RICHARD HENRY WILDE (1789-1847), a native of Ireland, became a prominent lawyer in Georgia and served five terms in Congress. From 1835 to 1841 he was a student of Italian art and letters abroad, mainly in Florence. Returning to America, he published *Conjectures Concerning . . . Tasso* (1842) and practiced law at New Orleans, where he was appointed professor of constitutional law at Tulane in the year of his death. He left in manuscript works on Dante and the Italian lyric poets and a Byronic travel-poem, *Hesperia*, published in 1847. His *Miscellaneous Poems* appeared in 1844. He is best remembered for his appealing lyric, "My Life Is Like the Summer Rose," and his sonnet from *Hesperia*, "To the Mockingbird."

St. George Tucker (1752-1827) was born in Bermuda and settled in Virginia about 1768. He was graduated from William and Mary in 1772, practiced law, and was eminent as soldier, jurist, writer on legal subjects, and professor at William and Mary. As a young man he wrote poetry of some charm, including *Liberty* (1788) and the anonymous *Probationary Odes of Jonathan Pinder* (1796), satirizing the Federalists and mistakenly attributed to Freneau. His song "Resignation" exhibits, like Wilde's lyrics, the combination of beauty and romantic melancholy which characterize most nineteenth-century Southern verse.

Edward Coote Pinkney (1802-1828), of Maryland, was born in London while his father, William Pinkney, was minister to England. Brilliant and well educated but impatient and quarrelsome, he resigned from the navy, idled as a lawyer, deserted in the Mexican War of Independence, and died at twenty-six after gaining a brief distinction as a newspaper editor in Baltimore and professor of *belles-lettres* in the University of Maryland. His chief love was poetry, and Poe praised him as the chief lyric poet of America. The two poems given below provide some basis for this high appraisal. His volume of verse, *Miscellaneous Poems*, appeared in 1825.

Samuel Henry Dickson (1798-1872), a native of Charleston, South Carolina, was

graduated from Yale and the University of Pennsylvania Medical School and became a distinguished physician and professor of medicine successively at Charleston, New York, and Philadelphia. He was author of a number of medical works and a few graceful songs, of which "I Sigh for the Land of the Cypress and Pine," reminiscent of Byron and Moore, is best known.

John Howard Payne (1791-1852) was born in New York City, of New England and Hebrew parentage. As a youth he decided upon a theatrical career and left Union College to go on the stage. A great success as a juvenile actor, he continued as actor and dramatist from 1809 to 1842, spending the last twenty-nine years in Europe. His chief dramatic successes, from which he received little remuneration, were his tragedy *Brutus* (1818), *Richelieu* (1826), and *Charles the Second, or the Merry Monarch* (with Irving, 1824). The song "Home, Sweet Home" was written as a lyric for his opera *Clari, the Maid of Milan* (1823). Disappointed in financial return for his work, he left the stage and in 1843 accepted the American consulship at Tunis, where he died. In 1883 his bones were brought back and reburied with impressive ceremonies at Washington.

The Reverend John Pierpont (1785-1866) was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, and graduated at Yale. He was as restless and versatile as his friend, John Neal, with whom he was living at Baltimore as a student of theology when he published his *Airs of Palestine* (1816). From 1819 to 1845 he was pastor of the Unitarian Hollis Street Church, in Boston. The numerous reform movements which he ardently advocated eventually caused dissension and dismissal from his church. Later he filled two other pulpits, a Civil War chaplaincy, and a government clerkship at Washington. His poem, "Warren's Address at the Battle of Bunker Hill," was long a favorite with schoolboy orators.

John Neal (1793-1876), an erratic genius, was born of Quaker parentage in Portland, Maine, and variously educated and employed before writing, while a law student and practitioner at Baltimore, a volume of verse, the *Battle of Niagara* (1818); a verse tragedy *Otho* (1819), and five novels, *Keep Cool* (1817), *Logan* (1822), *Errata* (1823), *Seventy-Six* (1823), and *Randolph* (1823). From 1823 to 1827 he was in England to answer "on the spot" Sidney Smith's sneering question "Who ever reads an American book?" Having satisfied himself by the English publication of a novel, *Brother Jonathan* (1825), and a number of articles in the chief British periodicals, he returned in 1827 to a long life of varied activity in his native city. In his literary periodical, *The Yankee* (1828-1829), he wrote regarding the youthful Poe, according to the latter, "the very first word of encouragement I ever remember to have heard." Bold, imaginative, boastful, and possessed of indubitable but undisciplined ability, he fell short of being, as he might have been, a close rival of Cooper in historical fiction. Of his many stories, essays, and poems, only a few short lyrics have enough finish to be remembered.

Carlos Wilcox (1794-1827), born in New Hampshire, was brought up in Vermont, graduated from Middlebury College in 1813 and from Andover Theological Seminary in 1817, and was pastor at Hartford, Connecticut, for two years before he suffered a physical breakdown in 1826. His verses, printed with a memoir in his *Remains* (1828), show a fidelity in description of nature excelled by few of his contemporaries.

Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney (1791-1865), a native of Norwich, Connecticut, schoolmistress, and wife of a Hartford merchant, was perhaps the most prolific woman writer of sentimental verse and prose in America. She contributed to virtually all the literary magazines and was praised by Poe. In 1840 she extended her conquests to Great Britain, but returned to complete her total of sixty-seven books and a manuscript autobiography, *Letters of Life*. Her merits were those of the successful verse columnist, universal sentiment not too deep for any reader, and virtually inexhaustible facility in writing.

Brief biographies of all these writers except Carlos Wilcox will be found in *DAB*, and bibliographies for all in *CHAL*. T. O. Mabbott and F. L. Pleadwell edited the *Life and Works of Edward Coote Pinkney* in 1926. Neal left an autobiography, *Wandering Recollections of a Somewhat Busy Life* (1869). An unpublished biography of Neal has been compiled by I. T. Richards. *American Writers: A Series of Papers Contributed to Blackwood's Magazine (1824-1825) by John Neal*, edited with notes and introduction by F. L. Pattee, was published at Durham, N. C., in 1937. Biographies of John Howard Payne were published by G. Harrison (1913) and W. T. Hanson (revised ed., 1885). Mrs. Sigourney's *Letters of Life* appeared in 1866.

### MY LIFE IS LIKE THE SUMMER ROSE

By Richard Henry Wilde

My life is like the summer rose,  
That opens to the morning sky,  
But ere the shades of evening close,  
Is scattered on the ground—to die!  
Yet on the rose's humble bed  
The sweetest dews of night are shed,  
As if she wept the waste to see—  
But none shall weep a tear for me!

My life is like the autumn leaf  
That trembles in the moon's pale ray— 10  
Its hold is frail—its date is brief,  
Restless—and soon to pass away!  
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,  
The parent tree will mourn its shade,  
The winds bewail the leafless tree—  
But none shall breathe a sigh for me.

My life is like the prints, which feet  
Have left on Tampa's desert strand;  
Soon as the rising tide shall beat,  
All trace will vanish from the sand, 20  
Yet, as if grieving to efface  
All vestige of the human race,  
On that lone shore loud moans the sea—  
But none, alas! shall mourn for me!  
c 1813 c 1818

### TO THE MOCKINGBIRD

By Richard Henry Wilde

WINGED mimic of the woods! thou motley  
fool!  
Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?  
Thine ever ready notes of ridicule  
Pursue thy fellow still with jest and gibe.  
Wit, sophist, songster, Yorick of thy tribe,  
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school,



To thee the palm of scoffing we ascribe,  
Arch-mocker and mad Abbot of Misrule!  
For aught thou art by day—but all night long  
Thou pour'st a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn  
strain, 10

As if thou didst in this thy moonlight song  
Like to the melancholy Jacques complain,  
Missing on falsehood, folly, vice, and wrong,  
And sighing for thy motley coat again

1847

## RESIGNATION

By St George Tucker

DAYS of my youth,  
Ye have ghid away;  
Hairs of my youth,  
Ye are frosted with gray,  
Eyes of my youth,

Your keen sight is no more;

Cheeks of my youth,

Ye are furrowed all o'er;

Strength of my youth,

All your vigor is gone, 10

Thoughts of my youth,

Your gay visions are flown.

Days of my youth

I wish not your recall;

Hairs of my youth,

I'm content ye should fall,

Eyes of my youth,

You much evil have seen;

Cheeks of my youth,

Bathed in tears have you been, 20

Thoughts of my youth,

You have led me astray;

Strength of my youth,

Why lament your decay?

Days of my age,

Ye will shortly be past;

Pains of my age,

Yet awhile can ye last;

Joys of my age,

In true wisdom delight; 30

Eyes of my age,

Be religion your light;

Thoughts of my age,

Dread not the cold sod;

Hopes of my age,

Be ye fixed on your God.

## A HEALTH

By Edward Coote Pinkney

I FILL this cup to one made up  
Of loveliness alone,  
A woman, of her gentle sex  
The seeming paragon,  
To whom the better elements  
And kindly stars have given  
A form so fair, that, like the air,  
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,  
Like those of morning birds, 10  
And something more than melody  
Dwells ever in her words,  
The coinage of her heart are they,  
And from her lips each flows  
As one may see the burdened bee  
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,  
The measures of her hours,  
Her feelings have the fragrancy,  
The freshness of young flowers, 20  
And lovely passions, changing oft,  
So fill her, she appears  
The image of themselves by turns,—  
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will  
trace  
A picture on the brain,  
And of her voice in echoing hearts  
A sound must long remain,  
But memory, such as mine of her,  
So very much endears, 30  
When death is nigh my latest sigh  
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up  
Of loveliness alone,  
A woman, of her gentle sex  
The seeming paragon—  
Her health and would on earth there  
stood  
Some more of such a frame,  
That life might be all poetry,  
And weariness a name. 40

1825

## A SERENADE

By Edward Coote Pinkney

LOOK out upon the stars, my love,  
And shame them with thine eyes,  
On which, than on the lights above,  
There hang more destinies.  
Night's beauty is the harmony  
Of blending shades and light;  
Then, lady, up,—look out, and be  
A sister to the night!

Sleep not! thine image wakes for aye  
Within my watching breast 10  
Sleep not! from her soft sleep should fly  
Who robs all hearts of rest  
Nay, lady, from thy slumbers break,  
And make this darkness gay  
With looks, whose brightness well might  
make  
Of darker nights a day.

1822

1823

I SIGH FOR THE LAND OF THE  
CYPRESS AND PINE

By Samuel Henry Dickson

I SIGH for the land of the cypress and pine,  
Where the jessamine blooms, and the gay  
woodbine,  
Where the moss droops low from the green  
oak tree,—  
Oh, that sun-bright land is the land for me!

The snowy flower of the orange there  
Sheds its sweet fragrance through the air,  
And the Indian rose delights to twine  
Its branches with the laughing vine.

There the deer leaps light through the open  
glade,  
Or hides him far in the forest shade. 10  
When the woods resound in the dewy morn  
With the clang of the merry hunter's horn

There the hummingbird, of rainbow plume,  
Hangs over the scarlet creeper's bloom;  
While 'midst the leaves his varying dyes  
Sparkle like half-seen fairy eyes.

There the echoes ring through the livelong day  
With the mock-bird's changeful roundelay;  
And at night, when the scene is calm and still,  
With the moan of the plaintive whippoor-  
will. 20

Oh! I sigh for the land of the cypress and pine,  
Of the laurel, the rose, and the gay woodbine,  
Where the long, gray moss decks the rugged  
oak tree,—  
That sun-bright land is the land for me.

## HOME, SWEET HOME!

By John Howard Payne

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may  
roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like  
home,  
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us  
there,  
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met  
with elsewhere  
Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!  
There's no place like Home! there's no place  
like Home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;  
O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!  
The birds singing gayly, that came at my  
call,—  
Give me them,—and the peace of mind,  
dearer than all! 10

Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!  
There's no place like Home! there's no place  
like Home!

How sweet 'tis to sit 'neath a fond father's  
smile,  
And the cares of a mother to soothe and  
beguile!  
Let others delight mid new pleasures to roam,  
But give me, oh, give me, the pleasures of  
home!  
Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!  
There's no place like Home! there's no place  
like Home!

To thee I'll return, overburdened with care;  
The heart's dearest solace will smile on me  
there, 20

No more from that cottage again will I roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.

Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!  
There's no place like Home! there's no place  
like Home!

1823

## THE BALLOT

By John Pierpont

A WEAPON that comes down as still  
As snowflakes fall upon the sod,  
But executes a freeman's will,  
As lightning does the will of God.

1816

## MUSIC OF THE NIGHT

By John Neal

THERE are harps that complain to the presence  
of night,

To the presence of night alone—  
In a near and unchangeable tone—  
Like winds, full of sound, that go whispering  
by,

As if some immortal had stooped from the sky,  
And breathed out a blessing—and flown!

Yea! harps that complain to the breezes of  
night,

To the breezes of night alone,  
Growing fainter and fainter, as ruddy and  
bright

The sun rolls aloft in his drapery of light, 10  
Like a conqueror, shaking his brilliant hair  
And flourishing robe on the edge of the air!

Burning crimson and gold  
On the clouds that unfold,  
Breaking onward in flame, while an ocean  
divides

On his right and his left. So the Thunderer  
rides,

When he cuts a bright path through the  
heaving tides,

Rolling on, and erect, in a charioting throne!

Yea! strings that lie still in the gushing of day,  
That awake, all alive, to the breezes of  
night; 20

There are hautboys and flutes too, forever at  
play

When the evening is near, and the sun is  
away,

Breathing out the still hymn of delight;  
These strings by invisible fingers are played—

By spirits, unseen and unknown,  
But thick as the stars, all this music is made;

And these flutes, alone,

In one sweet dreamy tone,

Are ever blown,

Forever and forever.

30

The live-long night ye hear the sound,  
Like distant waters flowing round  
In ringing caves, while heaven is sweet  
With crowding tunes, like halls  
Where fountain-music falls,  
And rival minstrels meet

1818

## A SUMMER NOON

By Carlos Wilcox

A SULTRY noon, not in the summer's prime,  
When all is fresh with life, and youth, and  
bloom,

But near its close, when vegetation stops,  
And fruits mature stand ripening in the sun,  
Soothes and enervates with its thousand  
charms,

Its images of silence and of rest,  
The melancholy mind The fields are still.

The husbandman has gone to his repast,  
And, that partaken, on the coolest side

Of his abode, reclines in sweet repose 10  
Deep in the shaded stream the cattle stand,

The flocks beside the fence, with heads all  
prone,

And panting quick. The fields, for harvest ripe,  
No breezes bend in smooth and graceful waves,

While with their motion, dim and bright by  
turns,

The sunshine seems to move, nor even a  
breath

Brushes along the surface with a shade  
Fleeting and thin, like that of flying smoke.

The slender stalks their heavy bended heads  
Support as motionless as oaks their tops. 20

O'er all the woods the topmost leaves are still;  
Even the wild poplar leaves, that, pendant  
hung

By stems elastic, quiver at a breath,  
Rest in the general calm. The thistledown,  
Seen high and quick, by gazing up beside  
Some shading object, in a silver shower  
Plumbs down, and slower than the slowest  
snow,

Through all the sleepy atmosphere descends;  
And where it lights, though on the steepest  
roof,

Or smallest spire of grass, remains unmoved.  
White as a fleece, as dense and as distinct 31  
From the resplendent sky, a single cloud,  
On the soft bosom of the air becalmed,  
Drops a lone shadow, as distinct and still,  
On the bare plain, or sunny mountain's side;  
Or in the bare polished mirror of the lake,  
In which the deep reflected sky appears  
A calm, sublime immensity below.

No sound or motion of a living thing  
The stillness breaks, but such as serve to  
soothe, 40

Or cause the soul to feel the stillness more  
The yellow-hammer by the wayside picks,  
Mutely, the thistle's seed, but in her flight,  
So smoothly serpentine, her wings outspread  
To rise a little, closed to fall as far,  
Moving like sea-fowl o'er the heaving waves,  
With each new impulse chimes a feeble note  
The russet grasshopper at times is heard,  
Snapping his many wings, as half he flies, 49  
Half-hovers in the air Where strikes the sun,  
With sultriest beams, upon the sandy plain,  
Or stony mount, or in the close, deep vale,  
The harmless locust of this western clime,  
At intervals, amid the leaves unseen,  
Is heard to sing with one unbroken sound,  
As with a long-drawn breath, beginning low,  
And rising to the midst with shriller swell,  
Then in low cadence dying all away  
Beside the stream, collected in a flock,  
The noiseless butterflies, though on the  
ground, 60

Continue still to wave their open fans  
Powdered with gold. While on the jutting  
twigs

The spindling insects that frequent the banks  
Rest, with their thin, transparent wings out-  
spread

As when they fly. Oftimes, though seldom  
seen,

The cuckoo, that in summer haunts our  
groves,

Is heard to moan, as if at every breath  
Panting aloud. The hawk, in mid-air hush,  
On his broad pinions sailing round and round,  
With not a flutter, or but now and then, 70  
As if his trembling balance to regain,  
Utters a single scream, but faintly heard;  
And all is still again.

1822?

## ON A SLEEPING INFANT

By Lydia Huntley Sigourney

O CHILD of innocence and bliss,  
And gentle mirth, and joy benign,  
Fond friendship's wish, affection's kiss,  
And warm solicitude are thine

If ever from yon vaulted sky,  
Angelic hosts to earth descend,  
On thee they sure would cast an eye,  
And o'er thine infant slumbers bend.

For no dark deeds of guilt or shame,  
Of falsehood, arrogance, or strife, 10  
Of cruel pride, or cold disdain,  
Have ever marked thy spotless life.

I, stopping in the giddy maze  
Of youth, to catch a smile from thee,  
Am pleased to look upon the days  
Of careless, guiltless infancy

Perceive as with a visioned eye,  
The throngs of care, and woe, and dread,  
Which, pressing on in sable dye,  
Are hovering round thy cradle bed 20

Sternly, impatiently, they wait  
The time when thou shalt be their prey,  
For well they know this peaceful state  
Excludes their proud and bitter sway.

Could she, who with a mother's love,  
Thy pliant form has just embraced,  
But see the woes that thou must prove,  
The bitterness which thou shalt taste;

The nameless pangs thy heart must know,  
The anguish that will fright thy sleep, 30  
Her smile would sicken into woe,  
And she would seek alone to weep.

O thou, who thus the eye hast veiled,  
The book of fate so slowly given,  
I thank thee, that thou hast concealed  
From man the prescience of heaven.

Ah, when upon thy troubled soul  
The ills of life shall closely press,  
May resignation's meek control  
Allay the tumult of distress

40

For often in affliction's school,  
Though the sad heart perceives it not,  
Virtue is gained, and wisdom's rule,  
That never, never is forgot

When o'er thy fading joys declined  
The sounding waves of sorrow roll,  
Perchance thou then that hope mayst  
find  
Which proves an anchor to the soul.

Or should the friends whom thou shalt love  
Thy fond and fearless heart deceive, 50  
Thou still mayst find a friend above  
Who never will forsake or grieve.

O child of innocence and bliss,  
And gentle mirth, and joy benign,  
Fond friendship's wish, affection's kiss,  
And warm solicitude are thine.

1822

### THE CARELESS HEART

By Lydia Huntley Sigourney

SAY, canst thou tell me what is like the heart  
That cold and careless ne'er performs its part?

A garden, left neglected, waste, and bare,  
Where light the wandering people of the air,  
To catch the scattered seed that moulders  
there.

## 1789 ~ James Fenimore Cooper ~ 1851

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER was born at Burlington, New Jersey. When he was two years old, his family moved to central New York. There the elder Cooper was a judge and owner of a large tract of land. Cooper spent his youth at Otsego Hall, his father's manor at Cooperstown, adjoining Lake Otsego, where, in an environment still retaining frontier conditions, the family lived in the state befitting a gentleman pioneer. Prepared for Yale by the rector of St. Peter's in Albany, he acquired a firm prejudice against New England and all Yankees. In his junior year at college, he was dismissed for a student prank, and shipped before the mast on a merchant vessel to train himself for the navy. Admitted as a midshipman, he served on the Atlantic, Lake Ontario, and Lake Champlain, settings he was later to use in his books. On his marriage in 1811, however, his bride, of the Tory De Lancey family, insisted on his giving up his profession, and he was satisfied to become a gentleman farmer. For the next eight years it seemed that he had found his vocation, managing three different farms, near enough to New York so that he could attend the theater and hobnob with the "Croakers" and other literary men of the town.

The story goes that one day he grew impatient with an English novel which he was reading aloud to his wife, and declared that he could write a better one. She challenged him to try, with the result that he published *Precaution* in 1820. It was a

conventional novel of English manners in which he introduced a set balancing of characters that reappears in his later works. In his next book, *The Spy* (1821), he wisely shifted to the Westchester County that he knew well, and used for his hero a real Revolutionary spy, Harvey Birch. In this novel Cooper already shows his weakness and his strength. His language is stilted and affected, but the narrative is vigorous, and he arouses suspense by the use of flight and pursuit—soon to become a formula in his work. The book was at once successful in America and abroad. It was followed in 1823 by *The Pioneers*, important as a picture of Cooper's boyhood home, and as the first appearance of Natty Bumppo, the Leatherstocking who became his greatest creation. In the same year came *The Pilot*, a patriotic story of the sea, introducing John Paul Jones, and meant to show Scott, who had just published *The Pirate*, that a landsman could not do justice to an ocean tale.

These three successes established Cooper's position in New York. He founded—and controlled—the Bread and Cheese Club, a literary society. He served on the committee of welcome for Lafayette, and received an honorary degree from Columbia. Meanwhile he planned to write a story about each of the thirteen original states, but completed only *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), an accurate but dull account of Bunker's Hill. Instead he decided to go on with Natty Bumppo. In 1826 *The Last of the Mohicans* and in 1827 *The Prairie* not only continued the story of the great scout but introduced, in Chingachgook and Uncas, the Indian chiefs peculiar to Cooper's fiction, distinguished for nobility, eloquence, cunning, and romantic qualities.

In 1826 Cooper was appointed to the nominal position of consul at Lyons, France. For over seven years he lived with his family in Europe, traveling, spending much time in Paris, and meeting Scott, Lafayette, Moore, and other notables. Three of six novels published while there—*The Red Rover* (1828), *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* (1829), and *The Water-Witch* (1831)—deal with the American scene. Three others—*The Bravo* (1831), *The Heidenmauer* (1832), and *The Headsman* (1833)—are European historical romances, designed to "debunk" the glamor of monarchical and feudal tradition. In these and in *Notions of the Americans* (1828), he annoyed Europeans by finding fault with their character and institutions and eulogizing those of America.

Returning late in 1833 to New York, he was disappointed with his country and with his countrymen, concerned, as he thought, with "struggles for place, . . . jealousies of contending families, and the influence of mere money." At Coopers-town he and his neighbors quarreled. The tradition of the democratic feudal patroon and the frontier of his imagination were gone. For six years he abandoned fiction for historical and critical works, of which *A Letter to His Countrymen* (1834), *Gleanings in Europe* (1837-1838), *Homeward Bound* (1838), and *Home as Found* (1838) expressed and defended his views of Europeans and Americans. These cul-

minated in *The American Democrat* (1838), "his most direct and comprehensive formulation of his social and political creed," maintaining that ideal democracy is not incompatible with true aristocracy—the "natural aristocracy" of Jefferson. These views brought him into partisan conflict with the editors of Whig newspapers, who assailed him acrimoniously, extending their attacks to his novels. Angered and embittered, Cooper retorted in kind with accusations of vulgarity, stupidity, and misrepresentation, which led to libel suits by which he gained legal vindication but lost popularity. Even his fair and accurate *History of the Navy of the United States* (1839) aroused recrimination and bitterness.

In 1840 he returned to fiction, though much of it is still critical in purpose. With *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841) he rounded out the Leatherstocking Tales. Of his other novels the series consisting of *Satanstoe* (1845), *The Chainbearer* (1845), and *The Redskins* (1846)—in which he treated three generations of a New York family with some of the skill of his earlier series—are important because of the social views expressed in them. Of his last novels, *The Crater* (1848) and *The Ways of the Hour* (1850) are respectively a social allegory and a satire on trial by jury. Though his personal relations became somewhat calmer, and public appreciation of his work was returning, his prejudices remained strong and active.

Nevertheless Cooper's reputation as the earliest important American novelist is secure. His faults are inevitable in hurried production. Phrases and formulas recur annoyingly. Conversation is rarely lifelike. There are long passages of slow description. But his rapid work bears with it advantages as well. At his best Cooper has speed in narrative, characters that are convincing in their romantic backgrounds, and above all a sense of vitality and energy. The gusto with which he lived spills over into his books.

Though only his tales of adventure are well known, fully half of his novels deal with themes of social comment. It is worth noting also that the inadequacies of his style in narration tend to disappear in his argumentative and expository writing. In his personality and political and social views there was less of inconsistency than appears on the surface. He was sincerely devoted to freedom and opposed to tyranny of any sort. Freedom should allow the individual to develop clear-mindedness, nobility of character, and unselfishness—the qualities of a gentleman. When he found democratic Americans who were greedy, contentious, ignorant, and unmindful of others' rights, he assailed them in the name of democracy. By nature fearless, outspoken, and brusque, and brought up in a community of which his father was the first citizen and to a large degree the owner, he never learned to curb his tongue or pen, or to consider seriously the views of others.

Cooper believed that novels should have significance and an elevating purpose, beyond their value as entertainment. His conception of art, says Professor Quinn,

"was to write about those things which are important, those scenes which are thrilling, those souls which have in them some flavor of nobility." He defended the idealizing of his heroes, white and red, as "the privilege of all writers of fiction, more particularly when their works aspire to the elevation of romances, to present the *beau-ideal* of their characters to the reader." He thought that a "rigid adhesion to truth, an indispensable requisite in history and travels, destroys the charm of fiction; for all that is necessary to be conveyed to the mind by the latter had better be done by delineation of principles, and of characters in their classes, than by a too fastidious attention to originals."

Cooper's great contribution to literature was the romance of the forest and the sea. Lack of American historical background was to him no handicap. In fact, only in isolation from ordinary civilization, perhaps, could he develop the unspoiled natural gentleman whom Leatherstocking portrays. This character, one of the few great personalities in world literature, is developed partly from an actual trapper of Cooper's childhood days, partly from the character and exploits of Daniel Boone, whose death in 1820 brought him back to public attention, partly from primitivistic fiction, and partly from his own ideas of true American character. His idealization of a few good Indians, partly derived from the Moravian Heckewelder's description of the Christian Indians of Pennsylvania, should be set off against the larger number in his books who share only their cunning and endurance, and are bloodthirsty and treacherous. In romances of the sea he had few predecessors—Smollett, John Davis, Scott in *The Pirate*—none of whom made the sea a living element in his stories; and he has had no peers. It is an inglorious tribute to Cooper's skill and excellence as a narrator in these two new fields that he should have been the progenitor of a flood of inferior thrillers of Wild West adventure and pirate stories in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The chief of many editions of Cooper's collected works are *J. Fenimore Cooper's Works* (32 vols., 1884-1890), edited by Susan F. Cooper, his daughter; and *The Works of James Fenimore Cooper* (33 vols., 1895-1900). Editions of separate works with helpful introductions are *The Deerslayer*, in American Authors Series, F. L. Pattee, ed. (1927), *Last of the Mohicans*, in Modern Readers' Series, F. L. Pattee, ed. (1927), *The Pathfinder*, in Modern Readers' Series, R. A. Sharp, ed. (1926); *The Spy*, in Modern Student's Library, Tremaine McDowell, ed. (1931), *The American Democrat*, in Americana Deserta, H. L. Mencken, ed. (1931); *Gleanings in Europe*, R. E. Spiller, ed. (2 vols., 1928-1930). R. E. Spiller's *Cooper*, in the American Writers Series (1933), is an excellently edited volume of selections, with bibliography. Cooper directed his manuscripts to be destroyed. His remaining *Correspondence* was edited by his grandson, James F. Cooper (2 vols., 1922).

Noteworthy biographies are those by T. R. Lounsbury (1882); M. E. Phillips (1913); H. W. Boynton (1931), and R. E. Spiller, *Fenimore Cooper, Critic of His Times* (1931), in which emphasis is placed upon Cooper's social thought. Carl Van Doren is author of the *DAB* article and of the bibliography in *CHAL*, I, 350-54. R. E. Spiller and P. C. Blackburn have prepared *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Writings of James Fenimore Cooper* (1934). For further biography, see N. F.



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### From THE PILOT

The earliest and best of Cooper's sea-novels is *The Pilot* (1823), dealing with American naval adventures on the east coast of England during the Revolution. The events center about Cooper's customary two pairs of lovers, and there is plenty of opportunity for his usual chase and counter-chase as the contestants' fortunes shift. These are set against the larger exploits of the mysterious Pilot, John Paul Jones. The best character in the story is Long Tom Coffin, the Nantucket whaleman. The selection is an episode which occurs while Jones, Captain Griffith, and Manual, captain of marines, are reconnoitering on land

#### CHAPTER XVII

"Po! Very like a whale!"

SHAKESPEARE

WHILE the young cornet still continued gazing at the whaleboat (for it was the party

from the schooner that he saw), the hour expired for the appearance of Griffith and his Companions; and Barnstable reluctantly determined to comply with the letter of his instructions, and leave them to their own sagacity and skill to regain the *Ariel*. The boat had been suffered to ride in the edge of the surf, since the appearance of the sun, and the eyes of her crew were kept anxiously fixed on the cliffs, though in vain, to discover the signal that was to call them to the place of landing. After looking at his watch for the twentieth time, and as often casting glances of uneasy dissatisfaction toward the shore, the lieutenant exclaimed:

"A charming prospect this, Master Coffin, but rather too much poetry in it for your taste; I believe you relish no land that is of a harder consistency than mud!"

"I was born on the waters, sir," returned

the cockswain, from his snug abode, where he was bestowed with his usual economy of room, "and it's according to all things for a man to love his native soil. I'll not deny, Captain Barnstable, but I would rather drop my anchor on a bottom that won't broom a keel; though at the same time, I harbor no great malice against dry land."

"I shall never forgive it, myself, if any accident has befallen Griffith in this excursion," rejoined the lieutenant; "his pilot may be a better man on the water than on *terra firma*, Long Tom "

The cockswain turned his solemn visage, with an extraordinary meaning, toward his commander, before he replied:

"For as long a time as I have followed the waters, sir, and that has been ever since I've drawn my rations, seeing that I was born while the boat was crossing Nantucket shoals, I've never known a pilot come off in greater need than the one we fell in with when we made that stretch or two on the land, in the dog-watch of yesterday."

"Ayl the fellow has played his part like a man, the occasion was great, and it seems that he was quite equal to his work."

"The frigate's people tell me, sir, that he handled the ship like a top," continued the cockswain; "but she is a ship that is a natural 30 enemy of the bottom!"

"Can you say as much for this boat, Master Coffin?" cried Barnstable; "keep her out of the surf, or you'll have us rolling in upon the beach, presently, like an empty water-cask; you must remember that we cannot all wade like yourself, in two-fathom water."

The cockswain cast a cool glance at the crests of foam that were breaking over the tops of the billows, within a few yards of 40 where their boat was riding, and called aloud to his men:

"Pull a stroke or two; away with her into dark water."

The drop of the oars resembled the movements of a nice machine, and the light boat skimmed along the water like a duck, that approaches to the very brink of some imminent danger, and then avoids it, at the most critical moment, apparently without an effort. While 50 this necessary movement was making, Barn-

stable arose and surveyed the cliffs with keen eyes, and then, turning once more, in disappointment from his search, he said:

"Pull more from the land, and let her run down at an easy stroke to the schooner. Keep a lookout at the cliffs, boys; it is possible that they are stowed in some of the holes in the rocks, for it's no daylight business they are on."

The order was promptly obeyed, and they had glided along for nearly a mile in this manner, in the most profound silence, when suddenly the stillness was broken by a heavy rush of air, and a dash of the water, seemingly at no great distance from them.

"By Heaven, Tom," cried Barnstable, starting, "there is the blow of a whale!"

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain, with undisturbed composure; "here is his spout not half a mile to seaward; the easterly gale has driven the creature to leeward, and he begins to find himself in shoal water. He's been sleeping, while he should have been working to windward!"

"The fellow takes it coolly, too; he's in no hurry to get an offing!"

"I rather conclude, sir," said the cockswain, rolling over his tobacco in his mouth, very composedly, while his little sunken eyes began to twinkle with pleasure at the sight, "the gentleman has lost his reckoning, and don't know which way to head to take himself back into blue water."

"Tis a finback!" exclaimed the lieutenant; "he will soon make headway, and be off."

"No, sir, 'tis a right whale," answered Tom; "I saw his spout; he threw up a pair of as pretty rainbows as a Christian would wish to look at. He's a real oil-butt, that fellow!"

Barnstable laughed, turned himself away from the tempting sight, and tried to look at the cliffs; and then unconsciously bent his longing eyes again on the sluggish animal, who was throwing his huge carcass, at times, for many feet from the water, in idle gambols. The temptation for sport and the recollection of his early habits at length prevailed over his anxiety in behalf of his friends, and the young officer inquired of his cockswain:

"Is there any whale-line in the boat, to make fast to that harpoon which you bear about with you in fair weather or foul?"

"I never trust the boat from the schooner without part of a shot, sir," returned the cockswain; "there is something natural in the sight of a tub to my old eyes."

Barnstable looked at his watch, and again at the cliffs, when he exclaimed, in joyous tones:

"Give strong way, my hearties! There seems nothing better to be done, let us have a stroke of a harpoon at this impudent rascal!"

The men shouted spontaneously, and the old cockswain suffered his solemn visage to relax into a small laugh, while the whaleboat sprang forward like a courser for the goal. During the few minutes they were pulling toward their game, Long Tom arose from his crouching attitude in the stern-sheets, and transferred his huge form to the bows of the boat, where he made such preparations to strike the whale as the occasion required. The tub, containing about half of a whale-line, was placed at the feet of Barnstable, who had been preparing an oar to steer with, in place of the rudder, which was unshipped, in order that if necessary the boat might be whirled round when not advancing.

Their approach was utterly unnoticed by the monster of the deep, who continued to amuse himself with throwing the water in two circular spouts high into the air, occasionally flourishing the broad flukes of his tail with a graceful but terrific force, until the hardy seamen were within a few hundred feet from him, when he suddenly cast his head downward, and, without an apparent effort, reared his immense body for many feet above the water, waving his tail violently, and producing a whizzing noise that sounded like the rushing of winds.

The cockswain stood erect, poised his harpoon, ready for the blow, but when he beheld the creature assume this formidable attitude, he waved his hand to his commander, who instantly signed to his men to cease rowing. In this situation the sportsmen rested for a few moments, while the whale struck several blows on the water in rapid succession, the noise of which re-echoed along the cliffs, like the hollow reports of so many cannon. After this wanton exhibition of his terrible strength, the monster sank again into his native element,

and slowly disappeared from the eyes of his pursuers.

"Which way did he head, Tom?" cried Barnstable, the moment the whale was out of sight.

"Pretty much up and down, sir," returned the cockswain, whose eye was gradually brightening with the excitement of the sport; "he'll soon run his nose against the bottom if he stands long on that course, and will be glad to get another snuff of pure air. Send her a few fathoms to starboard, sir, and I promise we shall not be out of his track."

The conjecture of the experienced old seaman proved true; for in a few moments the water broke near them, and another spout was cast into the air, when the huge animal rushed for half his length in the same direction, and fell on the sea with a turbulence and foam equal to that which is produced by the launching of a vessel for the first time into its proper element. After this evolution the whale rolled heavily and seemed to rest from further efforts.

His slightest movements were closely watched by Barnstable and his cockswain, and when he was in a state of comparative rest, the former gave a signal to his crew to ply their oars once more. A few long and vigorous strokes sent the boat directly up to the broadside of the whale, with its bows pointing toward one of the fins, which was at times, as the animal yielded sluggishly to the action of the waves, exposed to view. The cockswain poised his harpoon with much precision, and then darted it from him with a violence that burned the iron in the blubber of their foe. The instant the blow was made Long Tom shouted with singular earnestness

"Starn all!"

"Stern all!" echoed Barnstable, when the obedient seamen, by united efforts, forced the boat in a backward direction, beyond the reach of any blow from their formidable antagonist. The alarmed animal, however, meditated no such resistance; ignorant of his own power and of the insignificance of his enemies, he sought refuge in flight. One moment of stupid surprise succeeded the entrance of the iron, when he cast his huge tail into the air with a violence that threw the sea around him

into increased commotion, and then disappeared with the quickness of lightning amid a cloud of foam.

"Snub him!" shouted Barnstable; "hold on, Tom, he rises already."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the composed cockswain, seizing the line, which was running out of the boat with a velocity that rendered such a manoeuvre rather hazardous, and causing it to yield more gradually round the large loggerhead that was placed in the bows of the boat for that purpose. Presently the line stretched forward, and rising to the surface with tremulous vibrations, it indicated the direction in which the animal might be expected to reappear. Barnstable had cast the bows of the boat toward that point, before the terrified and wounded victim rose once more to the surface, whose time was, however, no longer wasted in his sports, but who cast the waters aside, as he forced his way with prodigious velocity along the surface. The boat was dragged violently in his wake, and cut through the billows with a terrific rapidity that at moments appeared to bury the slight fabric in the ocean. When Long Tom beheld his victim throwing his spouts on high again, he pointed with exultation to the jetting fluid, which was streaked with the deep red of blood, and cried

"Ay, I've touched the fellow's life! it must be more than two foot of blubber that stops my iron from reaching the life of any whale that ever sculled the ocean!"

"I believe you have saved yourself the trouble of using the bayonet you have rigged for a lance," said his commander, who entered into the sport with all the ardor of one whose youth had been chiefly passed in such pursuits. "Feel your line, Master Coffin; can we haul alongside of our enemy? I like not the course he is steering, as he tows us from the schooner."

"Tis the creater's way, sir," said the cockswain; "you know they need the air in their nostrils, when they run, the same as a man—but lay hold, boys, and let's haul up to him."

The seamen now seized the whale-line, and slowly drew their boat to within a few feet of the tail of the fish, whose progress became sensibly less rapid, as he grew weak with the

loss of blood. In a few minutes he stopped running, and appeared to roll uneasily on the water, as if suffering the agony of death.

"Shall we pull in and finish him, Tom?" cried Barnstable; "a few sets from your bayonet will do it."

The cockswain stood examining his game with cool discretion, and replied to his interrogatory:

"No, sir, no—he's going into his flurry; there's no occasion for disgracing ourselves by using a soldier's weapon in taking a whale. Starn off, sir, starn off, the creater's in his flurry!"

The warning of the prudent cockswain was promptly obeyed, and the boat cautiously drew off to a distance, leaving to the animal a clear space while under its dying agonies. From a state of perfect rest, the terrible monster threw its tail on high, as when in sport, but its blows were trebled in rapidity and violence, till all was hid from view by a pyramid of foam that was deeply dyed with blood. The roarings of the fish were like the bellowing of a herd of bulls, and to one who was ignorant of the fact, it would have appeared as if a thousand monsters were engaged in deadly combat, behind the bloody mist that obstructed the view. Gradually, these efforts subsided, and when the discolored water again settled down to the long and regular swell of the ocean, the fish was seen, exhausted, and yielding passively to his fate. As life departed, the enormous black mass rolled to one side; and, when the white and ghastly skin of the belly became apparent, the seamen well knew that their victory was achieved.

"What's to be done now?" said Barnstable, as he stood and gazed with a diminished excitement at their victim; "he will yield no food, and his carcass will probably drift to land, and furnish our enemies with the oil."

"If I had but the creater in Boston Bay," said the cockswain, "it would prove the making of me; but such is my luck forever! Pull up, at any rate, and let me get my harpoon and line—the English shall never get them while old Tom Coffin can blow."

"Don't speak too fast," said the strokesman of the boat, "whether he get your iron or not, here he comes in chase!"

"What mean you, fellow?" cried Barnstable.  
 "Captain Barnstable can look for himself," returned the seaman, "and tell whether I speak truth."

The young sailor turned and saw the *Alacrity* bearing down before the wind, with all her sails set, as she rounded a headland but a short half league to windward of the place where the boat lay.

"Pass that glass to me," said the captain, with steady composure. "This promises us work in one of two ways; if she be armed, it has become our turn to run; if not, we are strong enough to carry her."

A very brief survey made the experienced officer acquainted with the true character of the vessel in sight; and, replacing the glass with much coolness, he said:

"That fellow shows long arms and ten teeth, besides King George's pennant from his topmast-head. Now, my lads, you are to pull for your lives; for, whatever may be the notions of Master Coffin on the subject of his harpoon, I have no inclination to have my arms smothered by John Bull, though his majesty himself put on the irons."

The men well understood the manner and meaning of their commander; and, throwing aside their coats, they applied themselves in earnest to their task. For half an hour a profound silence reigned in the boat, which made an amazing progress. But many circumstances conspired to aid the cutter, she had a fine breeze, with smooth water, and a strong tide in her favor; and at the expiration of the time we have mentioned, it was but too apparent that the distance between the pursued and pursuers was lessened nearly half. Barnstable preserved his steady countenance, but there was an expression of care gathering around his dark brow, which indicated that he saw the increasing danger of their situation.

"That fellow has long legs, Master Coffin," he said, in a cheerful tone; "your whale-line must go overboard, and the fifty oar must be handled by your delicate hands."

Tom arose from his seat, and, proceeding forward, he cast the tub and its contents together into the sea, when he seated himself at the bow oar, and bent his athletic frame with amazing vigor to the task.

"Ah! there is much of your philosophy in that stroke, Long Tom," cried his commander. "Keep it up, boys; and if we gain nothing else, we shall at least gain time for deliberation.—Come, Master Coffin, what think you? We have three resources before us, let us hear which is your choice: first, we can turn and fight and be sunk; secondly, we can pull to the land, and endeavor to make good our retreat to the schooner in that manner; and, thirdly, we can head to the shore, and possibly, by running under the guns of that fellow, get the wind of him, and keep the air in our nostrils, after the manner of the whale. D—n the whale! but for the tow the black rascal gave us, we should have been out of sight of this rover!"

"If we fight," said Tom, with quite as much composure as his commander manifested, "we shall be taken or sunk, if we land, sir, I shall be taken, for one man, as I never could make any headway on dry ground, and if we try to get the wind of him by pulling under the cliffs, we shall be cut off by a parcel of lubbers that I can see running along their edges, hoping, I dare say, that they shall be able to get a skulking shot at a boat's crew of honest seafaring men."

"You speak with as much truth as philosophy, Tom," said Barnstable, who saw his slender hopes of success curtailed by the open appearance of the horse and foot on the cliffs. "These Englishmen have not slept the last night, and I fear Griffith and Manual will fare but badly. That fellow brings a capful of wind down with him—'tis just his play, and he walks like a race-horse. Hal he begins to be in earnest!"

While Barnstable was speaking, a column of white smoke was seen issuing from the bows of the cutter; and as the report of a cannon was wafted to their ears, the shot was seen skipping from wave to wave, tossing the water in spray, and flying to a considerable distance beyond them. The seamen cast cursory glances in the direction of the passing ball, but it produced no manifest effect in either their conduct or appearance. The cockswain, who scanned its range with an eye of more practice than the rest, observed: "That's a lively piece for its metal, and it speaks with

a good clear voice; but if they should hear it aboard the *Ariel*, the man who fired it will be sorry it wasn't born dumb."

"You are the prince of philosophers, Master Coffin!" cried Barnstable; "there is some hope in that; let the Englishmen talk away, and, my life on it, the *Ariels* don't believe it is thunder; hand me a musket—I'll draw another shot."

The piece was given to Barnstable, who discharged it several times, as if to taunt their enemies; and the scheme was completely successful. Goaded by the insults, the cutter discharged gun after gun at the little boat, throwing the shot frequently so near as to wet her crew with the spray, but without injuring them in the least. The failure of these attempts of the enemy excited the mirth of the reckless seamen, instead of creating any alarm, and whenever a shot came nearer than common, the cockswain would utter some such expression as

"A ground swell, a long shot, and a small object make a clean target," or "A man must squint straight to hit a boat."

As, notwithstanding their unsuccessful gunnery, the cutter was constantly gaining on the whaleboat, there was a prospect of a speedy termination of the chase, when the report of a cannon was thrown back like an echo from one of the Englishman's discharges, and Barnstable and his companions had the pleasure of seeing the *Ariel* stretching slowly out from the little bay where she had passed the night, with the smoke of the gun of defiance curling above her taper masts.

A loud and simultaneous shout of rapture was given by the lieutenant and all his boat's crew at this cheering sight, while the cutter took in all her light sails; and as she hauled up on a wind, she fired a whole broadside at the successful fugitives. Many stands of grape, with several round shot, flew by the boat and fell upon the water near them, raising a cloud of foam, but without doing any injury.

"She dies in a flurry," said Tom, casting his eyes at the little vortex into which the boat was then entering.

"If her commander be a true man," cried Barnstable, "he'll not leave us on so short an acquaintance. Give way, my souls! give

way! I would see more of this loquacious cruiser."

The temptation to exertion was great, and it was not disregarded by the men; in a few minutes the whaleboat reached the schooner, when the crew of the latter received their commander and his companions with shouts and cheers that rang across the waters and reached the ears of the disappointed spectators on the verge of the cliffs

#### CHAPTER XVIII

"Thus guided on their course they bore,  
Until they near'd the mainland shore,  
When frequent on the hollow blast,  
Wild shouts of merriment were cast."

*Lord of the Isles*

The joyful shouts and hearty cheers of the *Ariel's* crew continued for some time after her commander had reached her deck. Barnstable answered the congratulations of his officers by cordial shakes of the hand; and after waiting for the ebullition of delight among the seamen to subside a little, he beckoned with an air of authority for silence

"I thank you, my lads, for your good will," he said, when all were gathered around him in deep attention, "they have given us a tough chase, and if you had left us another mile to go, we had been lost. That fellow is a king's cutter, and though his disposition to run to leeward is a good deal mollified, yet he shows signs of fight. At any rate, he is stripping off some of his clothes, which looks as if he were game. Luckily for us, Captain Manual has taken all the marines ashore with him (though what he has done with them, or himself, is a mystery), or we should have had our decks lumbered with live cattle; but as it is, we have a good working breeze, tolerably smooth water, and a dead match! There is a sort of national obligation on us to whip that fellow, and therefore, without more words about the matter, let us turn to and do it, that we may get our breakfasts."

To this specimen of marine eloquence the crew cheered as usual, the young men burning for the combat, and the few old sailors who belonged to the schooner shaking their heads with infinite satisfaction, and swearing

by sundry strange oaths that their captain "could talk, when there was need of such thing, like the best dictionary that ever was launched."

During this short harangue, and the subsequent comments, the *Ariel* had been kept, under a cloud of canvas, as near to the wind as she could lie, and as this was her best sailing, she had stretched swiftly out from the land to a distance whence the cliffs and the soldiers, who were spread along their summits, were plainly visible. Barnstable turned his glass repeatedly from the cutter to the shore, as different feelings predominated in his breast, before he again spoke.

"If Mr. Griffith is stowed away among those rocks," he at length said, "he shall see as pretty an argument, discussed in as few words, as he ever listened to, provided the gentlemen in yonder cutter have not changed their minds as to the road they intend to journey. What think you, Mr. Merry?"

"I wish with all my heart and soul, sir," returned the fearless boy, "that Mr. Griffith was safe aboard us; it seems the country is alarmed, and God knows what will happen if he is taken! As to the fellow to windward, he'll find it easier to deal with the *Ariel's* boat than with her mother, but he carries a broad sail; I question if he means to show play."

"Never doubt him, boy," said Barnstable; "he is working off the shore, like a man of sense, and besides, he has his spectacles on, trying to make out what tribe of Yankee Indians we belong to. You'll see him come to the wind presently and send a few pieces of iron down this way, by way of letting us know where to find him. Much as I like your first lieutenant, Mr. Merry, I would rather leave him on the land this day than see him on my decks. I want no fighting captain to work this boat for me! But tell the drummer, sir, to beat to quarters."

The boy, who was staggering under the weight of his melodious instrument, had been expecting this command, and without waiting for the midshipman to communicate the order, he commenced that short rub-a-dub air that will at any time rouse a thousand men from the deepest sleep, and cause them to fly to their means of offence with a common soul.

The crew of the *Ariel* had been collected in groups studying the appearance of the enemy, cracking their jokes, and waiting only for this usual order to repair to the guns; and at the first tap of the drum, they spread with steadiness to the different parts of the little vessel where their various duties called them. The cannon were surrounded by small parties of vigorous and athletic young men; the few marines were drawn up in array with muskets; the officers appeared in their boarding-caps, with pistols stuck in their belts and naked sabers in their hands. Barnstable paced his little quarter-deck with a firm tread, dangling a speaking-trumpet by its lanyard on his forefinger, or occasionally applying the glass to his eye, which, when not in use, was placed under one arm, while his sword was resting against the foot of the mainmast, a pair of heavy ship's pistols were thrust into his belt also, and piles of muskets, boarding-pikes, and naked sabers were placed on different parts of the deck. The laugh of the seamen was heard no longer, and those who spoke uttered their thoughts only in low and indistinct whispers.

The English cutter held her way from the land until she got an offing of more than two miles, when she reduced her sails to a yet smaller number; and heaving into the wind, she fired a gun in a direction opposite to that which pointed to the *Ariel*.

"Now I would wager a quintal<sup>1</sup> of codfish, Master Coffin," said Barnstable, "against the best cask of porter that was ever brewed in England, that fellow believes a Yankee schooner can fly in the wind's eye! If he wishes to speak to us, why don't he give his cutter a little sheet and come down?"

The cockswain had made his arrangements for the combat with much more method and philosophy than any other man in the vessel. When the drum beat to quarters, he threw aside his jacket, vest, and shirt, with as little hesitation as if he stood under an American sun, and with all the discretion of a man who had engaged in an undertaking that required the free use of his utmost powers. As he was known to be a privileged individual in the *Ariel*, and one whose opinions, in all matters of seamanship, were regarded as oracles by

<sup>1</sup> a hundredweight

the crew, and were listened to by his commander with no little demonstration of respect, the question excited no surprise. He was standing at the breech of his long gun with his brawny arms folded on a breast that had been turned to the color of blood by long exposure, his grizzled locks fluttering in the breeze, and his tall form towering far above the heads of all near him.

"He hugs the wind, sir, as if it was his sweetheart," was his answer; "but he'll let go his hold soon; and if he don't, we can find a way to make him fall to leeward."

"Keep a good full!" cried the commander in a stern voice, "and let the vessel go through the water.—That fellow walks well, Long Tom, but we are too much for him on a bowline<sup>1</sup>, though, if he continue to draw ahead in this manner, it will be night before we can get alongside him."

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain, "them cutters carries a press of canvas when they seem to have but little; their gaffs are all the same as young booms, and spread a broad head to their mamsails. But it's no hard matter to knock a few cloths out of their bolt-ropes, when she will both drop astern and to leeward."

"I believe there is good sense in your scheme this time," said Barnstable, "for I am anxious about the frigate's people—though I hate a noisy chase. Speak to him, Tom, and let us see if he will answer."

"Ay, ay, sir," cried the cockswain, sinking his body in such a manner as to let his head fall to a level with the cannon that he controlled, when, after divers orders, and sundry movements to govern the direction of the piece, he applied a match, with a rapid motion, to the priming. An immense body of white smoke rushed from the muzzle of the cannon, followed by a sheet of vivid fire, until, losing its power, it yielded to the wind, and as it rose from the water, spread like a cloud, and passing through the masts of the schooner, was driven far to leeward, and soon blended in the mists which were swiftly scudding before the fresh breezes of the ocean.

Although many curious eyes were watching this beautiful sight from the cliffs, there

was too little of novelty in the exhibition to attract a single look of the crew of the schooner from the more important examination of the effect of the shot on their enemy. Barnstable sprang lightly on a gun, and watched the instant when the ball would strike with keen interest, while Long Tom threw himself aside from the line of the smoke with similar intention; holding one of his long arms extended toward his namesake, with a finger on the vent, and supporting his frame by placing the hand of the other on the deck, as his eyes glanced through an opposite port-hole, in an attitude that most men might have despaired of imitating with success.

"There go the chips!" cried Barnstable. "Bravo! Master Coffin, you never planted iron in the ribs of an Englishman with more judgment. Let him have another piece of it; and if he like the sport, we'll play a game of long bowls with him!"

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the cockswain, who, the instant he witnessed the effects of his shot, had returned to superintend the reloading of his gun, "if he holds on half an hour longer, I'll dub<sup>1</sup> him down to our own size, when we can close and make an even fight of it."

The drum of the Englishman was now, for the first time, heard rattling across the waters, and echoing the call to quarters, that had already proceeded from the *Arcturion*.

"Ah! you have sent him to his guns!" said Barnstable, "we shall now hear more of it; wake him up, Tom—wake him up."

"We shall start him on end, or put him to sleep altogether, shortly," said the deliberate cockswain, who never allowed himself to be at all hurried, even by his commander. "My shot are pretty much like a shoal of porpoises, and commonly sail in each other's wake. Stand by—heave her breech forward—so; get out of that, you damned young reprobate, and let my harpoon alone!"

"What are you at there, Master Coffin?" cried Barnstable, "are you tongue-tied?"

"Here's one of the boys skylarking with my harpoon on the lee-scuppers, and by-and-by, when I shall want it most, there'll be a noman's land to hunt for it in."

"Never mind the boy, Tom; send him aft

<sup>1</sup> close-hauled

<sup>1</sup> trim



here—so me, and I'll polish his behavior; give the Englishman some more iron."

"I want the little vulkan to pass up my cartridges," returned the angry old seaman, "but if you'll be so good, sir, as to hit him a crack or two, now and then, as he goes by you to the magazine, the monkey will learn his manners, and the schooner's work will be all the better done for it.—A young herring-faced monkey! to meddle with a tool ye don't know the use of. If your parents had spent more of their money on your education, and less on your outfit, you'd ha' been a gentleman to what ye are now."

"Hurrah! Tom, hurrah!" cried Barnstable, a little impatiently, "Is your namesake never to open his throat again?"

"Ay, ay, sir, all ready," grumbled the cockswain, "depress a little, so—so, a damned young baboon-behaved curmudgeon, overhaul that forward fall<sup>1</sup> more, stand by with your match—but I'll pay him!—fire!" This was the actual commencement of the fight; for as the shot of Tom Coffin travelled, as he had intimated, very much in the same direction, their enemy found the sport becoming too hot to be endured in silence, and the report of the second gun from the *Ariel* was instantly followed by that of the whole broadside of the *Alacrity*. The shot of the cutter flew in a very good direction, but her guns were too light to give them efficiency at that distance, and as one or two were heard to strike against the bends<sup>2</sup> of the schooner and fall back innocuously into the water, the cockswain, whose good humor became gradually restored as the combat thickened, remarked with his customary apathy:

"Them count for no more than love-taps—does the Englishman think that we are firing salutes?"

"Sur him up, Tom! every blow you give him will help to open his eyes," cried Barnstable, rubbing his hands with glee, as he witnessed the success of his efforts to close.

Thus far the cockswain and his crew had the fight, on the part of the *Ariel*, altogether to themselves, the men who were stationed at

the smaller and shorter guns standing in perfect idleness by their sides; but in ten or fifteen minutes the commander of the *Alacrity*, who had been staggered by the weight of the shot that had struck him, found that it was no longer in his power to retreat if he wished it; when he decided on the only course that was left for a brave man to pursue, and steered boldly in such a direction as would soonest bring him in contact with his enemy without exposing his vessel to be raked by his fire. Barnstable watched each movement of his foe with eagle eyes, and when the vessel had got within a lessened distance, he gave the order for a general fire to be opened. The action now grew warm and spirited on both sides. The power of the wind was counteracted by the constant explosion of the cannon, and instead of driving rapidly to leeward, a white canopy of curling smoke hung above the *Ariel*, or rested on the water, lingering in her wake, so as to mark the path by which she was approaching to a closer and still deadlier struggle. The shouts of the young sailors as they handled their instruments of death became more animated and fierce, while the cockswain pursued his occupation with the silence and skill of one who labored in a regular vocation. Barnstable was unusually composed and quiet, maintaining the grave deportment of a commander on whom rested the fortunes of the contest, at the same time that his dark eyes were dancing with the fire of suppressed animation.

"Give it them!" he occasionally cried, in a voice that might be heard amid the bellowing of the cannon, "never mind their cordage, my lads; drive home their bolts, and make your marks below their ridge-ropes."<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime the Englishman played a manful game.

He had suffered a heavy loss by the distant cannonade, which no metal he possessed could retort upon his enemy; but he struggled nobly to repair the error in judgment with which he had begun the contest. The two vessels gradually drew nigher to each other, until they both entered into the common cloud created by their fire, which thickened and spread around them in such a manner as to conceal their dark

<sup>1</sup> tackle regulating the position of the cannon

<sup>2</sup> thick planks along the sides

<sup>1</sup> lifeline along the bowsprit

hulls from the gaze of the curious and interested spectators on the cliffs. The heavy reports of the cannon were now mingled with the rattling of muskets and pistols, and streaks of fire might be seen glancing like flashes of lightning through the white cloud which enshrouded the combatants, and many minutes of painful uncertainty followed, before the deeply-interested soldiers who were gazing at the scene, discovered on whose banners victory had alighted.

We shall follow the combatants into their misty wreath, and display to the reader the events as they occurred.

The fire of the *Arcturion* was much the most quick and deadly, both because she had suffered less, and her men were less exhausted, and the cutter stood desperately on to decide the combat, after grappling, hand to hand. Barnstable anticipated her intention, and well understood her commander's reason for adopting this course; but he was not a man to calculate coolly his advantages, when pride and daring invited him to a more severe trial. Accordingly, he met the enemy half-way, and as the vessels rushed together, the stern of the schooner was secured to the bows of the cutter, by the joint efforts of both parties. The voice of the English commander was now plainly to be heard, in the uproar, calling to his men to follow him.

"Away there, boarders! repel boarders on the starboard quarter!" shouted Barnstable through his trumpet.

This was the last order that the gallant young sailor gave with this instrument, for as he spoke, he cast it from him, and, seizing his saber, flew to the spot where the enemy was about to make his most desperate effort. The shouts, execrations, and tauntings of the combatants now succeeded to the roar of the cannon, which could be used no longer with effect, though the fight was still maintained with spirited discharges of the small-arms.

"Sweep him from his decks!" cried the English commander, as he appeared on his own bulwarks, surrounded by a dozen of his bravest men, "drive the rebellious dogs into the sea!"

"Away there, marines!" retorted Barnstable, firing his pistol at the advancing enemy,

"leave not a man of them to sup his grog again."

The tremendous and close volley that succeeded this order nearly accomplished the command of Barnstable to the letter, and the commander of the *Alacrity*, perceiving that he stood alone, reluctantly fell back on the deck of his own vessel, in order to bring on his men once more.

"Board her! graybeards and boys, idlers and all!" shouted Barnstable, springing in advance of his crew—a powerful arm arrested the movement of the dauntless seaman, and before he had time to recover himself, he was drawn violently back to his own vessel by the irresistible grasp of his cockswain.

"The fellow's in his flurry," said Tom, "and it wouldn't be wise to go within reach of his flukes, but I'll just step ahead and give him a set with my harpoon."

Without waiting for a reply, the cockswain reared his tall frame on the bulwarks and was in the act of stepping on board of his enemy, when a sea separated the vessels, and he fell with a heavy dash of the waters into the ocean. As twenty muskets and pistols were discharged at the instant he appeared, the crew of the *Arcturion* supposed his fall to be occasioned by his wounds and were rendered doubly fierce by the sight, and the cry of their commander to—

"Revenge Long Tom! board her! Long Tom or death!"

They threw themselves forward in irresistible numbers and forced a passage, with much bloodshed, to the fore-castle of the *Alacrity*. The Englishman was overpowered but still remained undaunted—he rallied his crew and bore up most gallantly to the fray. Thrusts of pikes and blows of sabers were becoming close and deadly, while muskets and pistols were constantly discharged by those who were kept at a distance by the pressure of the throng of closer combatants.

Barnstable led his men in advance and became a mark of peculiar vengeance to his enemies, as they slowly yielded before his vigorous assaults. Chance had placed the two commanders on opposite sides of the cutter's deck, and the victory seemed to incline toward either party, whenever these daring officers directed the struggle in person. But the Eng-

lishman, perceiving that the ground he maintained in person was lost elsewhere, made an effort to restore the battle by changing his position, followed by one or two of his best men. A marine, who preceded him, levelled his musket within a few feet of the American commander, and was about to fire, when Merry glided among the combatants, and passed his dirk into the body of the man, who fell at the blow; shaking his piece with horrid imprecations, the wounded soldier prepared to deal his vengeance on his youthful assailant, when the fearless boy leaped within its muzzle,<sup>1</sup> and buried his own keen weapon in his heart.

"Hurrah!" shouted the unconscious Barnstable, from the edge of the quarter-deck, where, attended by a few men, he was driving all before him. "Revenge!—Long Tom and victory!"

"We have them!" exclaimed the Englishman, "handle your pikes! we have them between two fires."

The battle would probably have terminated very differently from what previous circumstances had indicated, had not a wild-looking figure appeared in the cutter's channels at that moment, issuing from the sea, and gaining the deck at the same instant. It was Long Tom, with his iron visage rendered fierce by his previous discomfiture, and his grizzled locks drenched with the briny element from which he had risen, looking like Neptune with his trident. Without speaking, he poised his harpoon, and, with a powerful effort, pinned the unfortunate Englishman to the mast of his own vessel.

"Starn all!" cried Tom, by a sort of instinct, when the blow was struck, and, catching up the musket of the fallen marine, he dealt out terrible and fatal blows with its butt on all who approached him, utterly disregarding the use of the bayonet on its muzzle. The unfortunate commander of the *Alacrity* brandished his sword with frantic gestures, while his eyes rolled in horrid wildness, when he writhed for an instant in his passing agonies, and then, as his head dropped lifeless upon his gored breast, he hung against the spar, a spectacle of dismay to his crew. A few of the

<sup>1</sup> i.e., too close to be harmed by discharge or a swinging blow

Englishmen stood chained to the spot in silent horror at the sight, but most of them fled to their lower deck, or hastened to conceal themselves in the secret parts of the vessel, leaving to the Americans the undisputed possession of the *Alacrity*.

1823

## FROM THE AMERICAN DEMOCRAT

### *An Aristocrat and a Democrat*

In his insistence upon the political theory of a democracy, Cooper did not lose sight of the fact, evident in his day as in ours, that it is a tendency of democracies to seek a level not above the average intelligence of the mass, and to emphasize achievement in the making and acquisition of things (Compare Emerson's "Ode to Channing"

Things are in the saddle  
And ride mankind.)

For the securing of a national achievement of more real value, there must be, Cooper maintains, an intellectual aristocracy, to the extent of complete freedom of following and cultivating one's individual tastes and gifts without jealousy and without interference by law or custom

We live in an age when the words aristocrat and democrat are much used, without regard to the real significations. An aristocrat is one of a few who possess the political power of a country, a democrat, one of the many. The words are also properly applied to those who entertain notions favorable to aristocratical or democratical forms of government. Such persons are not necessarily either aristocrats or democrats in fact, but merely so in opinion. Thus a member of a democratical government may have an aristocratical bias, and vice versa.

To call a man who has the habits and opinions of a gentleman, an aristocrat from that fact alone, is an abuse of terms and betrays ignorance of the true principles of government, as well as of the world. It must be an equivocal freedom under which every one is not the master of his own innocent acts and associations, and he is a sneaking democrat indeed who will submit to be dictated to, in those habits over which neither law nor morality assumes a right of control.

Some men fancy that a democrat can only be one who seeks the level, social, mental and

moral, of the majority, a rule that would at once exclude all men of refinement, education, and taste from the class. These persons are enemies of democracy, as they at once render it impracticable. They are usually great sticklers for their own associations and habits, too, though unable to comprehend any of a nature that are superior. They are, in truth, aristocrats in principle, though assuming a contrary pretension, the groundwork of all their feelings and arguments being self. Such is not the intention of liberty, whose aim is to leave every man to be the master of his own acts; denying hereditary honors, it is true, as unjust and unnecessary, but not denying the inevitable consequences of civilization

The law of God is the only rule of conduct in this, as in other matters. Each man should do as he would be done by. Were the question put to the greatest advocate of indiscriminate association, whether he would submit to have his company and habits dictated to him, he would be one of the first to resist the tyranny; for they who are the most rigid in maintaining their own claims in such matters, are usually the loudest in decrying those whom they fancy to be better off than themselves. Indeed, it may be taken as a rule in social intercourse, that he who is the most apt to question the pretensions of others is the most conscious of the doubtful position he himself occupies, thus establishing the very claims he affects to deny, by letting his jealousy of it be seen. Manners, education, and refinement, are positive things, and they bring with them innocent tastes which are productive of high enjoyments, and it is as unjust to deny their possessors their indulgence as it would be to insist on the less fortunate's passing the time they would rather devote to athletic amusements, in listening to operas for which they have no relish, sung in a language they do not understand

All that democracy means, is as equal a participation in rights as is practicable; and to pretend that social equality is a condition of popular institutions is to assume that the latter are destructive of civilization, for, as nothing is more self-evident than the impossibility of raising all men to the highest standard of tastes and refinement, the alternative would be to reduce the entire community to the lowest.

The whole embarrassment on this point exists in the difficulty of making men comprehend qualities they do not themselves possess. We can all perceive the difference between ourselves and our inferiors, but when it comes to a question of the difference between us and our superiors, we fail to appreciate merits of which we have no proper conceptions. In face of this obvious difficulty, there is the safe and just governing rule, already mentioned, or that of permitting every one to be the undisturbed judge of his own habits and associations, so long as they are innocent and do not impair the rights of others to be equally judges for themselves. It follows, that social intercourse must regulate itself, independently of institutions, with the exception that the latter, while they withhold no natural, bestow no factitious advantages beyond those which are inseparable from the rights of property, and general civilization

In a democracy, men are just as free to aim at the highest attainable places in society, as to attain the largest fortunes, and it would be clearly unworthy of all noble sentiment to say that the grovelling competition for money shall alone be free, while that which enlists all the liberal acquisitions and elevated sentiments of the race, is denied the democrat. Such an avowal would be at once a declaration of the inferiority of the system, since nothing but ignorance and vulgarity could be its fruits.

The democratic gentleman must differ in many essential particulars from the aristocratical gentleman, though in their ordinary habits and tastes they are virtually identical. Their principles vary; and, to a slight degree, their deportment accordingly. The democrat, recognizing the right of all to participate in power, will be more liberal in his general sentiments, a quality of superiority in itself; but in conceding this much to his fellow man, he will proudly maintain his own independence of vulgar domination as indispensable to his personal habits. The same principles and manliness that would induce him to depose a royal despot would induce him to resist a vulgar tyrant.

There is no more capital, though more common error, than to suppose him an aristocrat who maintains his independence of

habits; for democracy asserts the control of the majority, only in matters of law, and not in matters of custom. The very object of the institution is the utmost practicable personal liberty, and to affirm the contrary would be sacrificing the end to the means.

An aristocrat, therefore, is merely one who fortifies his exclusive privileges by positive institutions, and a democrat, one who is willing to admit of a free competition in all things. To say, however, that the last supposes this competition will lead to nothing is an assumption that means are employed without any reference to an end. He is the purest democrat who best maintains his rights, and no rights can be dearer to a man of cultivation than exemptions from unseasonable invasions on his time by the coarse-minded and ignorant.

1838

### From THE DEERSLAYER

#### [*Deerslayer's Escape*]

##### CHAPTER XXVII

"Thou hast been busy, Death, this day, and yet  
But half thy work is done! The gates of hell  
Are thronged, yet twice ten thousand spirits  
move,  
Who, from their warm and healthful tenements,  
Fear no divorce, must, ere the sun go down,  
Enter the world of woe!"—

SOUTHEY

ONE experienced in the signs of the heavens would have seen that the sun wanted but two or three minutes of the zenith, when Deerslayer landed on the point where the Hurons were now encamped, nearly abreast of the castle. This spot was similar to the one already described, with the exception that the surface of the land was less broken and less crowded with trees. Owing to these two circumstances, it was all the better suited to the purpose for which it had been selected, the space beneath the branches bearing some resemblance to a densely wooded lawn. Favored by its position and its spring, it had been much resorted to by savages and hunters, and the natural grasses had succeeded their fires, leaving an appearance of sward in places, a very unusual accompaniment of the virgin

forest. Nor was the margin of water fringed with bushes, as on so much of its shore, but the eye penetrated the woods immediately on reaching the strand, commanding nearly the whole area of the projection.

If it was a point of honor with the Indian warrior to redeem his word when pledged to return and meet his death at a given hour, so was it a point of characteristic pride to show no womanish impatience, but to reappear as nearly as possible at the appointed moment. It was well not to exceed the grace accorded by the generosity of the enemy, but it was better to meet it to a minute. Something of this dramatic effect mingles with most of the graver usages of the American aborigines, and no doubt, like the prevalence of a similar feeling among people more sophisticated and refined, may be referred to a principle of nature. We all love the wonderful, and when it comes attended by chivalrous self-devotion and a rigid regard to honor, it presents itself to our admiration in a shape doubly attractive. As respects Deerslayer, though he took a pride in showing his white blood by often deviating from the usages of the red-men, he frequently dropped into their customs, and oftener into their feelings, unconsciously to himself, in consequence of having no other arbiters to appeal to than their judgments and tastes. On the present occasion, he would have abstained from betraying a feverish haste by a too speedy return, since it would have contained a tacit admission that the time asked for was more than had been wanted, but, on the other hand, had the idea occurred to him, he would have quickened his movements a little, in order to avoid the dramatic appearance of returning at the precise instant set as the utmost limit of his absence. Still, accident had interfered to defeat the last intention, for when the young man put his foot on the point, and advanced with a steady tread towards the group of chiefs that was seated in grave array on a fallen tree, the oldest of their number cast his eye upward at an opening in the trees, and pointed out to his companions the startling fact that the sun was just entering a space that was known to mark the zenith. A common but low exclamation of surprise and admiration escaped every mouth,

and the grim warriors looked at each other; some with envy and disappointment, some with astonishment, at the precise accuracy of their victim, and others with a more generous and liberal feeling. The American Indian always deemed his moral victories the noblest, prizing the groans and yielding of his victim under torture more than the trophy of his scalp, and the trophy itself more than his life. To slay, and not to bring off the proof of victory, indeed, was scarcely deemed honorable; even these rude and fierce tenants of the forest, like their more nurtured brethren of the court and the camp, having set up for themselves imaginary and arbitrary points of honor, to supplant the conclusions of the right and the decisions of reason.

The Hurons had been divided in their opinions concerning the probability of their captive's return. Most among them, indeed, had not expected it possible for a pale-face to come back voluntarily, and meet the known penalties of an Indian torture; but a few of the seniors expected better things from one who had already shown himself so singularly cool, brave, and upright. The party had come to its decision, however, less in the expectation of finding the pledge redeemed, than in the hope of disgracing the Delawares by casting into their teeth the delinquency of one bred in their villages. They would have greatly preferred that Chingachgook should be their prisoner, and prove the traitor; but the pale-face scion of the hated stock was no bad substitute for their purposes, failing in their designs against the ancient stem. With a view to render the triumph as signal as possible, in the event of the hour's passing without the reappearance of the hunter, all the warriors and scouts of the party had been called in, and the whole band, men, women, and children, was now assembled at this single point, to be a witness of the expected scene. As the castle was in plain view, and by no means distant, it was easily watched by daylight, and it being thought that its inmates were now limited to Hurry, the Delaware, and the two girls, no apprehensions were felt of their being able to escape unseen. A large raft, having a breast-work of logs, had been prepared, and was in actual readiness to be used against either ark or

castle, as occasion might require, so soon as the fate of Deerslayer was determined, the seniors of the party having come to the opinion that it was getting to be hazardous to delay their departure for Canada beyond the coming night. In short, the band waited merely to dispose of this single affair, ere it brought matters to a crisis, and prepared to commence its retreat towards the distant waters of Ontario.

It was an imposing scene into which Deerslayer now found himself advancing. All the older warriors were seated on the trunk of the fallen tree, waiting his approach with grave decorum. On the right stood the young men, armed, while the left was occupied by the women and children. In the center was an open space of considerable extent, always canopied by leaves, but from which the underbrush, dead wood, and other obstacles had been carefully removed. The more open area had probably been much used by former parties, for this was the place where the appearance of a sward was the most decided. The arches of the woods, even at high noon, cast their somber shadows on the spot, which the brilliant rays of the sun that struggled through the leaves contributed to mellow, and, if such an expression can be used, to illuminate. It was probably from a similar scene that the mind of man first got its idea of the effects of Gothic tracery and churchly hues; this temple of nature producing some such effect, so far as light and shadows were concerned, as the well-known offspring of human invention.

As was not unusual among the tribes and wandering bands of the aborigines, two chiefs shared, in nearly equal degrees, the principal and primitive authority that was wielded over these children of the forest. There were several who might claim the distinction of being chief men, but the two in question were so much superior to all the rest in influence, that, when they agreed, no one disputed their mandates; and when they were divided, the band hesitated, like men who had lost their governing principle of action. It was also in conformity with practice—perhaps we might add in conformity with nature, that one of the chiefs was indebted to his mind for his influence,

whereas the other owed his distinction altogether to qualities that were physical. One was a senior, well known for eloquence in debate, wisdom in council, and prudence in measures; while his great competitor, if not his rival, was a brave, distinguished in war, notorious for ferocity, and remarkable, in the way of intellect, for nothing but the cunning and expedients of the warpath. The first was Rivenoak, who has already been introduced to the reader, while the last was called le Panthère, in the language of the Canadas, or the Panther, to resort to the vernacular of the English colonies. The appellation of the fighting chief was supposed to indicate the qualities of the warrior, agreeably to a practice of the red-man's nomenclature, ferocity, cunning, and treachery being, perhaps, the distinctive features of his character. The title had been received from the French, and was prized so much the more from that circumstance, the Indian submitting profoundly to the greater intelligence of his pale-face allies in most things of this nature. How well the *sobriquet* was merited, will be seen in the sequel

Rivenoak and the Panther sat side by side, awaiting the approach of their prisoner, as Deerslayer put his moccasined foot on the strand, nor did either move, or utter a syllable, until the young man had advanced into the center of the area, and proclaimed his presence with his voice. This was done firmly, though in the simple manner that marked the character of the individual.

"Here I am, Mingos," he said, in the dialect of the Delawares, a language that most present understood; "here I am, and there is the sun. One is not more true to the laws of nature, than the other has proved true to his word. I am your prisoner, do with me what you please. My business with man and earth is settled, nothing remains now but to meet the white man's God, according to a white man's duties and gifts."

A murmur of approbation escaped even the women at this address, and, for an instant there was a strong and pretty general desire to adopt into the tribe one who owned so brave a spirit. Still there were dissenters from this wish, among the principal of whom might be classed the Panther, and his sister, le Sumach,

so called from the number of her children, who was the widow of le Loup Cervier, now known to have fallen by the hand of the captive. Native ferocity held one in subjection, while the corroding passion of revenge prevented the other from admitting any gentler feeling at the moment. Not so with Rivenoak. This chief arose, stretched his arm before him in a gesture of courtesy, and paid his compliments with an ease and dignity that a prince might have envied. As, in that band, his wisdom and eloquence were confessedly without rivals, he knew that on himself would properly fall the duty of first replying to the speech of the pale-face.

"Pale-face, you are honest," said the Huron orator. "My people are happy in having captured a man, and not a skulking fox. We now know you, we shall treat you like a brave. If you have slain one of our warriors, and helped to kill others, you have a life of your own ready to give away in return. Some of my young men thought that the blood of a pale-face was too thin, that it would refuse to run under the Huron knife. You will show them it is not so, your heart is stout as well as your body. It is a pleasure to make such a prisoner, should my warriors say that the death of le Loup Cervier ought not to be forgotten, and that he cannot travel towards the land of spirits alone, that his enemy must be sent to overtake him, they will remember that he fell by the hand of a brave, and send you after him with such signs of our friendship as shall not make him ashamed to keep your company. I have spoken, you know what I have said."

"True enough, Mingo, all true as the gospel," returned the simple-minded hunter, "you have spoken, and I do know not only what you have said, but, what is still more important, what you mean. I dare to say your warrior the Lynx, was a stouthearted brave, and worthy of your friendship and respect, but I do not feel unworthy to keep his company without any passport from your hands. Nevertheless, here I am, ready to receive judgment from your council, if, indeed, the matter was not determined among you afore I got back."

"My old men would not sit in council over a pale-face until they saw him among them,"

answered Ruvenoak, looking around him a little ironically; "they said it would be like sitting in council over the winds, they go where they will, and come back as they see fit, and not otherwise. There was one voice that spoke in your favor, Deerslayer, but it was alone, like the song of the wren whose mate has been struck by the hawk."

"I thank that voice, whos'ever it may have been, Mingo, and will say it was as true a voice as the rest were lying voices. A furlough is as binding on a pale-face, if he be honest, as it is on a red-skin, and was it not so, I would never bring disgrace on the Delawares, among whom I may be said to have received my education. But words are useless and lead to braggin' feelin's, here I am, act your will on me."

Ruvenoak made a sign of acquiescence, and then a short conference was privately held among the chiefs. As soon as the latter ended, three or four young men fell back from among the armed group, and disappeared. Then it was signified to the prisoner that he was at liberty to go at large on the point, until a council was held concerning his fate. There was more of seeming than of real confidence, however, in this apparent liberality, inasmuch as the young men mentioned already formed a line of sentinels across the breadth of the point, inland, and escape from any other part was out of the question. Even the canoe was removed beyond this line of sentinels, to a spot where it was considered safe from any sudden attempt. These precautions did not proceed from a failure of confidence, but from the circumstance that the prisoner had now complied with all the required conditions of his parole, and it would have been considered a commendable and honorable exploit to escape from his foes. So nice, indeed, were the distinctions drawn by the savages, in cases of this nature, that they often gave their victims a chance to evade the torture, deeming it as creditable to the captors to overtake, or to outwit a fugitive, when his exertions were supposed to be quickened by the extreme jeopardy of his situation, as it was for him to get clear from so much extraordinary vigilance.

Nor was Deerslayer unconscious of, or forgetful of, his rights and of his opportunities.

Could he now have seen any probable opening for an escape, the attempt would not have been delayed a minute. But the case seemed desperate. He was aware of the line of sentinels, and felt the difficulty of breaking through it, unharmed. The lake offered no advantages, as the canoe would have given his foes the greatest facilities for overtaking him; else would he have found it no difficult task to swim as far as the castle. As he walked about the point, he even examined the spot to ascertain if it offered no place of concealment; but its openness, its size, and the hundred watchful glances that were turned towards him, even while those who made them affected not to see him, prevented any such expedient from succeeding. The dread and disgrace of failure had no influence on Deerslayer, who deemed it ever a point of honor to reason and feel like a white man rather than as an Indian, and who felt it a sort of duty to do all he could, that did not involve a dereliction from principle, in order to save his life. Still he hesitated about making the effort, for he also felt that he ought to see the chance of success before he committed himself.

In the meantime the business of the camp appeared to proceed in its regular train. The chiefs consulted apart, admitting no one but the Sumach to their councils, for she, the widow of the fallen warrior, had an exclusive right to be heard on such an occasion. The young men strolled about in indolent listlessness, awaiting the result with Indian patience, while the females prepared the feast that was to celebrate the termination of the affair, whether it proved fortunate, or otherwise, for our hero. No one betrayed feeling; and an indifferent observer, beyond the extreme watchfulness of the sentinels, would have detected no extraordinary movement or sensation to denote the real state of things. Two or three old women put their heads together, and, it appeared, unfavorably to the prospect of Deerslayer, by their scowling looks and angry gestures; but a group of Indian girls were evidently animated by a different impulse, as was apparent by stolen glances that expressed pity and regret. In this condition of the camp, an hour soon glided away.

Suspense is, perhaps, the feeling, of all



others, that is most difficult to be supported. When Deerslayer landed, he fully, in the course of a few minutes, expected to undergo the tortures of an Indian revenge, and he was prepared to meet his fate manfully; but the delay proved far more trying than the nearer approach of suffering, and the intended victim began seriously to meditate some desperate effort at escape, as it might be from sheer anxiety to terminate the scene, when he was suddenly summoned to appear, once more, in front of his judges, who had already arranged the band in its former order, in readiness to receive him

"Killer of the Deer," commenced Ravenoak, as soon as his captive stood before him, "my aged men have listened to wise words, they are ready to speak. You are a man whose fathers came from beyond the rising sun; we are children of the setting sun, we turn our faces towards the Great Sweet Lakes, when we look towards our villages. It may be a wise country and full of riches, towards the morning; but it is very pleasant towards the evening. We love most to look in that direction. When we gaze at the east, we feel afraid, canoe after canoe bringing more and more of your people in the track of the sun, as if their land was so full as to run over. The red-men are few already; they have need of help. One of our best lodges has lately been emptied by the death of its master, it will be a long time before his son can grow big enough to sit in his place. There is his widow; she will want venison to feed her and her children, for her sons are yet like the young of the robin before they quit the nest. By your hand has this great calamity befallen her. She has two duties, one to le Loup Cervier, and one to his children. Scalp for scalp, life for life, blood for blood, is one law; to feed her young, another. We know you, Killer of the Deer. You are honest; when you say a thing, it is so. You have but one tongue, and that is not forked, like a snake's. Your head is never hid in the grass; all can see it. What you say, that will you do. You are just. When you have done wrong, it is your wish to do right again, as soon as you can. Here is the Sumach; she is alone in her wigwam, with children crying around her for food; yonder is a rifle, it is

loaded and ready to be fired. Take the gun; go forth and shoot a deer; bring the venison and lay it before the widow of le Loup Cervier; feed her children; call yourself her husband. After which, your heart will no longer be Delaware, but Huron; le Sumach's ears will not hear the cries of her children; my people will count the proper number of warriors."

"I feared this, Ravenoak," answered Deerslayer, when the other had ceased speaking, "yes, I did dread that it would come to this. Hows'ever, the truth is soon told, and that will put an end to all expectations on this head. Mingo, I'm white, and Christian-born, 'twould ill become me to take a wife, under red-skin forms, from among heathen. That which I wouldn't do in peaceable times, and under a bright sun, still less would I do behind clouds, in order to save my life. I may never marry; most likely Providence, in putting me up here in the woods, has intended I should live single, and without a lodge of my own, but should such a thing come to pass, none but a woman of my own color and gifts shall darken the door of my wigwam. As for feeding the young of your dead warrior, I would do that cheerfully, could it be done without discredit, but it cannot, seeing that I can never live in a Huron village. Your own young men must find the Sumach in venison, and the next time she marries, let her take a husband whose legs are not long enough to overrun territory that don't belong to him. We fou't a fair battle, and he fell, in this there is nothin' but what a brave expects, and should be ready to meet. As for getting a Mingo heart, as well might you expect to see grey hairs on a boy, or the blackberry growing on the pine. No, no, Huron; my gifts are white, so far as wives are concerned, it is Delaware in all things touchin' Indians."

These words were scarcely out of the mouth of Deerslayer, before a common murmur betrayed the dissatisfaction with which they had been heard. The aged women, in particular, were loud in their expressions of disgust; and the gentle Sumach herself, a woman quite old enough to be our hero's mother, was not the least pacific in her denunciations. But all the other manifestations

of disappointment and discontent were thrown into the background by the fierce resentment of the Panther. This grim chief had thought it a degradation to permit his sister to become the wife of a pale-face of the Yengeese at all, and had only given a reluctant consent to the arrangement—one by no means unusual among the Indians, however—at the earnest solicitations of the bereaved widow, and it goaded him to the quick to find his condescension slighted, the honor he had with so much regret been persuaded to accord, condemned The animal from which he got his name does not glare on his intended prey with more frightful ferocity than his eyes gleamed on the captive, nor was his arm backward in seconding the fierce resentment that almost consumed his breast

"Dog of the pale-faces!" he exclaimed, in Iroquois, "go yell among the curs of your own evil hunting-grounds!"

The denunciation was accompanied by an appropriate action. Even while speaking, his arm was lifted, and the tomahawk hurled. Luckily the loud tones of the speaker had drawn the eye of Deerslayer towards him, else would that moment have probably closed his career. So great was the dexterity with which this dangerous weapon was thrown, and so deadly the intent, that it would have riven the skull of the prisoner, had he not stretched forth an arm, and caught the handle in one of its turns, with a readiness quite as remarkable as the skill with which the missile had been hurled. The projectile force was so great, notwithstanding, that when Deerslayer's arm was arrested, his hand was raised above and behind his own head, and in the very attitude necessary to return the attack. It is not certain whether the circumstance of finding himself unexpectedly in this menacing posture and armed, tempted the young man to retaliate, or whether sudden resentment overcame his forbearance and prudence. His eye kindled, however, and a small red spot appeared on each cheek, while he cast all his energy in the effort of his arm, and threw back the weapon at his assailant. The unexpectedness of this blow contributed to its success, the Panther neither raising an arm nor bending his head to avoid it. The keen little axe struck the

victim in a perpendicular line with the nose, directly between the eyes, literally braining him on the spot. Sallying forward, as the serpent darts at his enemy even while receiving its own death-wound, this man of powerful frame fell his length into the open area formed by the circle, quivering in death. A common rush to his relief left the captive, for a single instant, quite without the crowd; and, willing to make one desperate effort for life he bounded off with the activity of a deer. There was but a breathless instant, when the whole band, old and young, women and children, abandoning the lifeless body of the Panther where it lay, raised the yell of alarm, and followed in pursuit.

Sudden as had been the event which induced Deerslayer to make this desperate trial of speed, his mind was not wholly unprepared for the fearful emergency. In the course of the past hour, he had pondered well on the chances of such an experiment, and had shrewdly calculated all the details of success and failure. At the first leap, therefore, his body was completely under the direction of an intelligence that turned all its efforts to the best account, and prevented everything like hesitation or indecision, at the important instant of the start. To this alone was he indebted for the first great advantage, that of getting through the line of sentinels unharmed. The manner in which this was done, though sufficiently simple, merits a description.

Although the shores of the point were not fringed with bushes, as was the case with most of the others on the lake, it was owing altogether to the circumstance that the spot had been so much used by hunters and fishermen. This fringe commenced on what might be termed the main land, and was as dense as usual, extending in long lines both north and south. In the latter direction, then, Deerslayer held his way; and, as the sentinels were a little without the commencement of this thicket, before the alarm was clearly communicated to them the fugitive had gained its cover. To run among the bushes, however, was out of the question, and Deerslayer held his way for some forty or fifty yards in the water, which was barely knee deep, offering as great an obstacle to the speed of his pur-

quers as it did to his own. As soon as a favorable spot presented, he darted through the line of bushes, and issued into the open woods.

Several rifles were discharged at Deerslayer while in the water, and more followed as he came out into the comparative exposure of the clear forest. But the direction of his line of flight, which partially crossed that of the fire, the haste with which the weapons had been aimed, and the general confusion that prevailed in the camp, prevented any harm from being done. Bullets whistled past him, and many cut twigs from the branches at his side, but not one touched even his dress. The delay caused by these fruitless attempts was of great service to the fugitive, who had gained more than a hundred yards on even the leading men of the Hurons, ere something like concert and order had entered into the chase. To think of following with rifle in hand was out of the question; and after emptying their pieces in vague hopes of wounding their captive, the best runners of the Indians threw them aside, calling out to the women and boys to recover and load them again as soon as possible.

Deerslayer knew too well the desperate nature of the struggle in which he was engaged, to lose one of the precious moments. He also knew that his only hope was to run in a straight line, for as soon as he began to turn, or double, the greater number of his pursuers would put escape out of the question. He held his way, therefore, in a diagonal direction up the acclivity, which was neither very high nor very steep in this part of the mountain, but which was sufficiently toilsome for one contending for life, to render it painfully oppressive. There, however, he slackened his speed to recover breath, proceeding even at a quick walk, or a slow trot, along the more difficult parts of the way. The Hurons were whooping and leaping behind him; but this he disregarded, well knowing they must overcome the difficulties he had surmounted ere they could reach the elevation to which he had attained. The summit of the first hill was now quite near him, and he saw, by the formation of the land, that a deep glen intervened, before the base of a second hill could be reached. Walking deliberately to the sum-

mit, he glanced eagerly about him in every direction, in quest of a cover. None offered in the ground; but a fallen tree lay near him, and desperate circumstances require desperate remedies. This tree lay in a line parallel to the glen, at the brow of the hill, to leap on it, and then to force his person as close as possible under its lower side, took but a moment. Previously to disappearing from his pursuers, however, Deerslayer stood on the height and gave a cry of triumph, as if exulting at the sight of the descent that lay before him.—In the next instant he was stretched beneath the tree.

No sooner was this expedient adopted, than the young man ascertained how desperate had been his own efforts, by the violence of the pulsations in his frame. He could hear his heart beat, and his breathing was like the action of a bellows in quick motion. Breath was gained, however, and the heart soon ceased to throb as if about to break through its confinement. The footsteps of those who toiled up the opposite side of the acclivity were now audible, and presently voices and treads announced the arrival of the pursuers. The foremost shouted as they reached the height, then, fearful that their enemy would escape under favor of the descent, each leaped upon the fallen tree, and plunged into the ravine, trusting to get a sight of the pursued ere he reached the bottom. In this manner, Huron followed Huron, until Natty began to hope the whole had passed. Others succeeded, however, until quite forty had leaped over the tree, and then he counted them, as the surest mode of ascertaining how many could be behind. Presently all were in the bottom of the glen, quite a hundred feet below him, and some had even ascended part of the opposite hill, when it became evident an inquiry was making as to the direction he had taken. This was the critical moment; and one of nerves less steady, or of a training that had been neglected, would have seized it to rise, and fly. Not so with Deerslayer. He still lay quiet, watching with jealous vigilance every movement below, and fast regaining his breath.

The Hurons now resembled a pack of hounds at fault. Little was said, but each

man ran about, examining the dead leaves, as the hound hunts for the lost scent. The great number of moccasins that had passed made the examination difficult, though the in-toe of an Indian was easily to be distinguished from the freer and wider step of a white man. Believing that no more pursuers remained behind, and hoping to steal away unseen, Deerslayer suddenly threw himself over the tree, and fell on the upper side. This achievement appeared to be effected successfully, and hope beat high in the bosom of the fugitive. Rising to his hands and feet, after a moment lost in listening to the sounds in the glen, in order to ascertain if he had been seen, the young man next scrambled to the top of the hill, a distance of only ten yards, in the expectation of getting its brow between him and his pursuers, and himself so far under cover. Even this was effected, and he rose to his feet, walking swiftly but steadily along the summit, in a direction opposite to that in which he had first fled. The nature of the calls in the glen, however, soon made him uneasy, and he sprang upon the summit again, in order to reconnoiter. No sooner did he reach the height than he was seen, and the chase renewed. As it was better footing on the level ground, Deerslayer now avoided the side-hill, holding his flight along the ridge, while the Hurons, judging from the general formation of the land, saw that the ridge would soon melt into the hollow, and kept to the latter, as the easiest mode of heading the fugitive. A few, at the same time, turned south, with a view to prevent his escaping in that direction, while some crossed his trail towards the water, in order to prevent his retreat by the lake, running southerly.

The situation of Deerslayer was now more critical than it ever had been. He was virtually surrounded on three sides, having the lake on the fourth. But he had pondered well on all the chances, and took his measures with coolness, even while at the top of his speed. As is generally the case with the vigorous border-men, he could outrun any single Indian among his pursuers, who were principally formidable to him on account of their numbers and the advantages they possessed in position; and he would not have hesitated

to break off in a straight line, at any spot, could he have got the whole band again fairly behind him. But no such chance did, or indeed could now offer; and when he found that he was descending towards the glen, by the melting away of the ridge, he turned short, at right angles to his previous course, and went down the declivity with tremendous velocity, holding his way towards the shore. Some of his pursuers came panting up the hill, in direct chase, while most still kept on, in the ravine, intending to head him at its termination. Deerslayer had now a different, though a desperate project in view. Abandoning all thoughts of escape by the woods, he made the best of his way towards the canoe. He knew where it lay; could it be reached, he had only to run the gauntlet of a few rifles, and success would be certain. None of the warriors had kept their weapons, which would have retarded their speed, and the risk would come either from the uncertain hands of the women, or from those of some well-grown boy; though most of the latter were already out in hot pursuit. Everything seemed propitious to the execution of this plan, and the course being a continued descent, the young man went over the ground at a rate that promised a speedy termination to his toil.

As Deerslayer approached the point, several women and children were passed, but, though the former endeavored to cast dried branches between his legs, the terror inspired by his bold retaliation on the redoubted Panther, was so great, that none dared come near enough seriously to molest him. He went by all triumphantly, and reached the fringe of bushes. Plunging through these, our hero found himself once more in the lake, and within fifty feet of the canoe. Here he ceased to run, for he well understood that his breath was now all-important to him. He even stooped, as he advanced, and cooled his parched mouth, by scooping up water in his hand to drink. Still the moments pressed, and he soon stood at the side of the canoe. The first glance told him that the paddles had been removed! This was a sore disappointment after all his efforts, and, for a single moment, he thought of turning, and of facing his foes by walking with dignity into the center of the

camp again. But an infernal yell, such as the American savage alone can raise, proclaimed the quick approach of the nearest of his pursuers, and the instinct of life triumphed. Preparing himself duly, and giving a right direction to its bows, he ran off into the water bearing the canoe before him, threw all his strength and skill into a last effort, and cast himself forward so as to fall into the bottom of the light craft, without materially impeding its way. Here he remained on his back, both to regain his breath and to cover his person from the deadly rifle. The lighness, which was such an advantage in paddling the canoes, now operated unfavorably. The material was so like a feather, that the boat had no momentum; else would the impulse in that smooth and placid sheet have impelled it to a distance from the shore that would have rendered paddling with the hands safe. Could such a point once be reached, Deerslayer thought he might get far enough out to attract the attention of Chingachgook and Judith, who would not fail to come to his relief with other canoes, a circumstance that promised everything. As the young man lay in the bottom of the canoe, he watched its movements, by studying the tops of the trees on the mountain-side, and judged of his distance by the time and the motion. Voices on the shore were now numerous, and he heard something said about manning the raft, which, fortunately for the fugitive, lay at a considerable distance, on the other side of the point.

Perhaps the situation of Deerslayer had not been more critical that day, than it was at this moment. It certainly had not been one half as tantalizing. He lay perfectly quiet for two or three minutes, trusting to the single sense of hearing, confident that the noise in the lake would reach his ears, did any one venture to approach by swimming. Once or twice he fancied that the element was stirred by the cautious movement of an arm, and then he perceived it was the wash of the water on the pebbles of the strand; for, in mimicry of the ocean, it is seldom that those little lakes are so totally tranquil as not to possess a slight heaving and setting on their shores. Suddenly all the voices ceased, and a death-like stillness pervaded the spot; a quietness as profound as if all lay in the repose of inanimate life. By this

time, the canoe had drifted so far as to render nothing visible to Deerslayer, as he lay on his back, except the blue void of space, and a few of those brighter rays that proceed from the effulgence of the sun, marking his proximity. It was not possible to endure this uncertainty long. The young man well knew that the profound stillness foreboded evil, the savages never being so silent as when about to strike a blow; resembling the stealthy foot of the panther ere he takes his leap. He took out a knife, and was about to cut a hole through the bark, in order to get a view of the shore, when he paused from a dread of being seen in the operation, which would direct the enemy where to aim their bullets. At this instant a rifle was fired, and the ball pierced both sides of the canoe, within eighteen inches of the spot where his head lay. This was close work, but our hero had too lately gone through that which was closer, to be appalled. He lay still half a minute longer, and then he saw the summit of an oak coming slowly within his narrow horizon.

Unable to account for this change, Deerslayer could restrain his impatience no longer. Hitching his body along with the utmost caution, he got his eye at the bullet hole, and fortunately commanded a very tolerable view of the point. The canoe, by one of those imperceptible impulses that so often decide the fate of men as well as the course of things, had inclined southerly, and was slowly drifting down the lake. It was lucky that Deerslayer had given it a shove sufficiently vigorous to send it past the end of the point ere it took this inclination, or it must have gone ashore again. As it was, it drifted so near it as to bring the tops of two or three trees within the range of the young man's view, as has been mentioned, and, indeed, to come in quite as close proximity with the extremity of the point as was at all safe. The distance could not much have exceeded a hundred feet, though fortunately a light current of air from the southwest began to set it slowly off shore.

Deerslayer now felt the urgent necessity of resorting to some expedient to get farther from his foes, and, if possible, to apprise his friends of his situation. The distance rendered the last difficult, while the proximity to the point ren-

dered the first indispensable. As was usual in such craft, a large, round, smooth stone was in each end of the canoe, for the double purposes of seats and ballast; one of these was within reach of his feet. This stone he contrived to get so far between his legs as to reach it with his hands, and then he managed to roll it to the side of its fellow in the bows, where the two served to keep the trim of the light boat, while he worked his own body as far aft as possible. Before quitting the shore, and as soon as he perceived that the paddles were gone, Deerslayer had thrown a bit of dead branch into the canoe, and this was within reach of his arm. Removing the cap he wore, he put it on the end of this stick, just let it appear over the edge of the canoe, as far as possible from his own person. This ruse was scarcely adopted before the young man had proof how much he had underrated the intelligence of his enemies. In contempt of an artifice so shallow and commonplace, a bullet was fired directly through another part of the canoe, which actually razed his skin. He dropped the cap, and instantly raised it immediately over his head as a safeguard. It would seem that this second artifice was unseen, or what was more probable, the Hurons, feeling certain of recovering their captive, wished to take him alive.

Deerslayer lay passive a few minutes longer, his eye at the bullet hole, however, and much did he rejoice at seeing that he was drifting, gradually, farther and farther from the shore. When he looked upwards, the treetops had disappeared, but he soon found that the canoe was slowly turning, so as to prevent his getting a view of anything at his peep hole but of the two extremities of the lake. He now bethought him of the stick, which was crooked, and offered some facilities for rowing, without the necessity of using the experiment succeeded, on trial, better even than he had hoped, though his great embarrassment was to keep the canoe straight. That his present maneuver was seen soon became apparent by the clamor on the shore, and a bullet entering the stern of the canoe, traversed its length, whistling between the arms of our hero, and passed out at the head. This satisfied the fugitive that he was getting away with tolerable speed, and

induced him to increase his efforts. He was making a stronger push than common, when another messenger from the point broke the stick outboard, and at once deprived him of his oar. As the sound of voices seemed to grow more and more distant, however, Deerslayer determined to leave all to the drift, until he believed himself beyond the reach of bullets. This was nervous work, but it was the wisest of all the expedients that offered; and the young man was encouraged to persevere in it, by the circumstance that he felt his face fanned by the air, a proof that there was a little more wind.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

"Nor widows' tears, nor tender orphans' cries  
Can stop th' invader's force,  
Nor swelling seas, nor threatening skies,  
Prevent the pirate's course  
Their lives to selfish ends decreed,  
Through blood and rapine they proceed,  
No anxious thoughts of ill-repute,  
Suspend the impetuous and unjust pursuit,  
But power and wealth obtained, guilty and great,  
Their fellow-creatures' fears they raise, or urge  
their hate "

CONGREVE

By this time, Deerslayer had been twenty minutes in the canoe, and he began to grow a little impatient for some signs of relief from his friends. The position of the boat still prevented his seeing in any direction, unless it were up or down the lake, and, though he knew that his line of sight must pass within a hundred yards of the castle, it, in fact, passed that distance to the westward of the buildings. The profound stillness troubled him also, for he knew not whether to ascribe it to the increasing space between him and the Indiana, or to some new artifice. At length, wearied with fruitless watchfulness, the young man turned himself on his back, closed his eyes, and awaited the result in determined acquiescence. If the savages could so completely control their thirst for revenge, he was resolved to be as calm as themselves and to trust his fate to the interposition of the currents and air.

Some additional ten minutes may have passed in this quiescent manner, on both sides, when Deerslayer thought he heard a slight noise,

like a low rubbing against the bottom of his canoe. He opened his eyes of course, in expectation of seeing the face or arm of an Indian rising from the water, and found that a canopy of leaves was impending directly over his head. Starting to his feet, the first object that met his eye was Ravenoak, who had so far aided the slow progress of the boat as to draw it on the point, the grating on the strand being the sound that had first given our hero the alarm. The change in the drift of the canoe had been altogether owing to the baffling nature of the light currents of air, aided by some eddies in the water.

"Come," said the Huron, with a quiet gesture of authority to order his prisoner to land; "my young friend has sailed about till he is tired, he will forget how to run again unless he uses his legs."

"You've the best of it, Huron," returned Deerslayer, stepping steadily from the canoe, and passively following his leader to the open area of the point, "Providence has helped you in an unexpected manner. I'm your prisoner ag'in, and I hope you'll allow that I'm as good at breaking gaol as I am at keeping furloughs."

"My young friend is a moose!" exclaimed the Huron. "His legs are very long, they have given my young men trouble. But he is not a fish; he cannot find his way in the lake. We did not shoot him, fish are taken in nets, and not killed by bullets. When he turns moose again, he will be treated like a moose."

"Ay, have your talk, Ravenoak; make the most of your advantage. 'Tis your right, I suppose, and I know it is your gift. On that p'int there'll be no words atween us, for all men must and ought to follow their gifts. Hows'ever, when your women begin to taunt and abuse me, as I suppose will soon happen, let 'em remember that if a pale-face struggles for life so long as it's lawful and manful, he knows how to loosen his hold on it, decently, when he feels that the time has come. I'm your captive; work your will on me."

"My brother has had a long run on the hulls, and a pleasant sail on the water," returned Ravenoak more mildly, smiling at the same time, in a way that his listener knew denoted pacific intentions. "He has seen the woods, he has seen the water; which does he like best?"

Perhaps he has seen enough to change his mind, and make him hear reason."

"Speak out, Huron. Something is in your thoughts, and the sooner it is said, the sooner you'll get my answer."

"That is straight! There is no turning in the talk of my pale-face friend, though he is a fox in running. I will speak to him, his ears are now open wider than before, and his eyes are not shut. The Sumach is poorer than ever. Once she had a brother and a husband. She had children, too. The time came, and the husband started for the happy hunting-grounds without saying farewell, he left her alone with his children. This he could not help, or he would not have done it, le Loup Cervier was a good husband. It was pleasant to see the venison, and wild ducks, and geese, and bear's meat, that hung in his lodge in winter. It is now gone, it will not keep in warm weather. Who shall bring it back again? Some thought the brother would not forget his sister, and that, next winter, he would see that the lodge should not be empty. We thought thus, but the Panther yelled, and followed the husband on the path of death. They are now trying which shall first reach the happy hunting-grounds. Some think the Lynx can run fastest, and some think the Panther can jump the farthest. The Sumach thinks both will travel so fast and so far that neither will ever come back. Who shall feed her and her young? The man who told her husband and her brother to quit her lodge, that there might be room for him to come into it. He is a great hunter, and we know that the woman will never want."

"Ay, Huron, this is soon settled, according to your notions, but it goes sorely ag'in the grain of a white man's feelin's. I've heard of men's saving their lives thus-away, and I've know'd them that would prefer death to such a sort of captivity. For my part, I do not seek my end; nor do I seek matrimony."

"The pale-face will think of this while my people get ready for the council. He will be told what will happen. Let him remember how hard it is to lose a husband and a brother. Go, when we want him, the name of Deerslayer will be called."

This conversation had been held with no one near but the speakers. Of all the band that

had so lately thronged the place, Ruvenoak alone was visible. The rest seemed to have totally abandoned the spot. Even the furniture, clothes, arms, and other property of the camp had entirely disappeared, and the place bore no other proofs of the crowd that had so lately occupied it than the traces of their fires and resting-places, and the trodden earth that still showed the marks of their feet. So sudden and unexpected a change caused Deerslayer a good deal of surprise and some uneasiness, for he had never known it to occur in the course of his experience among the Delawares. He suspected, however, and rightly, that a change of encampment was intended, and that the mystery of the movement was resorted to in order to work on his apprehensions.

Ruvenoak walked up the vista of trees, as soon as he ceased speaking, leaving Deerslayer by himself. The chief disappeared behind the covers of the forest, and one unpracticed in such scenes might have believed the prisoner left to the dictates of his own judgment. But the young man, while he felt a little amazement at the dramatic aspect of things, knew his enemies too well to fancy himself at liberty, or a free agent. Still he was ignorant how far the Hurons meant to carry their artifices, and he determined to bring the question, as soon as practicable, to the proof. Affecting an indifference he was far from feeling, he strolled about the area, gradually getting nearer and nearer to the spot where he had landed, when he suddenly quickened his pace, though carefully avoiding all appearance of flight, and, pushing aside the bushes, he stepped upon the beach. The canoe was gone, nor could he see any traces of it, after walking to the northern and southern verges of the point, and examining the shores in both directions. It was evidently removed beyond his reach and knowledge, and under circumstances to show that such had been the intention of the savages.

Deerslayer now better understood his actual situation. He was a prisoner on the narrow tongue of land, vigilantly watched beyond a question, and with no other means of escape than that of swimming. He again thought of this last expedient, but the certainty that the canoe would be sent in chase, and the des-

perate nature of the chances of success, deterred him from the undertaking. While on the strand, he came to a spot where the bushes had been cut and thrown into a small pile. Removing a few of the upper branches, he found beneath them the dead body of the Panther. He knew that it was kept until the savages might find a place to inter it, when it would be beyond the reach of the scalping-knife. He gazed wistfully towards the castle, but there all seemed to be silent and desolate; and a feeling of loneliness and desertion came over him to increase the gloom of the moment.

"God's will be done!" murmured the young man, as he walked sorrowfully away from the beach, entering again beneath the arches of the wood, "God's will be done, on 'arth as it is in heaven! I did hope that my days would not be numbered so soon! but it matters little, after all. A few more winters, and a few more summers, and 'twould have been over, accordin' to natur'. Ah's me! the young and active seldom think death possible, till he grins in their faces and tells 'em the hour is come!"

While this soliloquy was being pronounced, the hunter advanced into the area, where to his surprise he saw Hetty alone, evidently awaiting his return. The girl carried the Bible under her arm and her face, over which a shadow of gentle melancholy was usually thrown, now seemed sad and downcast. Moving nearer, Deerslayer spoke.

"Poor Hetty," he said, "times have been so troublesome of late, that I'd altogether forgotten you, we meet, as it might be, to mourn over what is to happen. I wonder what has become of Chungachgook and Wah!"

"Why did you kill the Huron, Deerslayer," returned the girl reproachfully, "Don't you know your commandments, which say, 'Thou shalt not kill!' They tell me you have now slain the woman's husband and brother."

"It's true, my good Hetty,—'us gospel truth, and I'll not deny what has come to pass. But you must remember, gal, that many things are lawful in war, which would be unlawful in peace. The husband was shot in open fight, or open so far as I was concerned, while he had a better cover than common, and the brother brought his end on himself, by casting his



tomahawk at an unarmed prisoner. Did you witness that deed, gal?"

"I saw it, and was sorry it happened, Deerslayer; for I hoped you wouldn't have returned blow for blow, but good for evil."

"Ah, Hetty, that may do among the missionaries, but 'twould make an onsartain life in the woods. The Panther craved my blood, and he was foolish enough to throw arms into my hands at the very moment he was striving after it. 'Twould have been ag'in natur' not to raise a hand in such a trial, and 'twould have done discredit to my training and gifts. No, no; I'm as willing to give every man his own, as another, and so I hope you testify to them that will be likely to question you as to what you've seen this day."

"Deerslayer, do you mean to marry Sumach, now she has neither husband nor brother to feed her?"

"Are such your ideas of matrimony, Hetty? Ought the young to wive with the old—the pale-face with the red-skin—the Christian with the heathen? It's ag'in reason and natur', and so you'll see, if you'll think of it a moment."

"I've always heard mother say," returned Hetty, averting her face, more from a feminine instinct than from any consciousness of wrong, "that people should never marry until they loved each other better than brothers and sisters, and I suppose that is what you mean Sumach is old, and you are young"

"Ay, and she's red, and I'm white. Besides, Hetty, suppose you was a wife, now, having married some young man of your own years, and state, and color—Hurry Harry, for instance,"—Deerslayer selected this example, simply from the circumstance that he was the only young man known to both,—and that he had fallen on a warpath, would you wish to take to your bosom, for a husband, the man that slew him?"

"Oh! no, no, no," returned the girl, shuddering. "That would be wicked, as well as heartless! No Christian girl could, or would, do that. I never shall be the wife of Hurry, I know; but were he my husband, no man should ever be it again, after his death."

"I thought it would get to this, Hetty, when you come to understand sarcumstances. 'Tis a moral impossibility that I should ever

marry Sumach; and, though Indian weddin's have no priests, and not much religion, a white man who knows his gifts and duties can't profit by that, and so make his escape, at the fitting time I do think death would be more nat'ral like, and welcome, than wedlock with this woman."

"Don't say it too loud," interrupted Hetty impanently; "I suppose she will not like to hear it. I'm sure Hurry would rather marry even me than suffer torments, though I am feeble-minded, and I am sure it would kill me to think he'd prefer death to being my husband"

"Ay, gal, you an't Sumach, but a comely young Christian, with a good heart, pleasant smile, and kind eye Hurry might be proud to get you, and that, too, not in misery and sorrow, but in his best and happiest days. Hows'-ever, take my advice, and never talk to Hurry about these things; he's only a borderer, at the best"

"I wouldn't tell him, for the world!" exclaimed the girl, looking about her like one affrighted, and blushing, she knew not why "Mother always said young women shouldn't be forward, and speak their minds before they're asked,—oh! I never forget what mother told me 'Tis a pity Hurry is so handsome, Deerslayer, I do think fewer girls would like him then, and he would sooner know his own mind"

"Poor gal, poor gal, it's plain enough how it is, but the Lord will bear in mind one of your simple heart and kind feelin's! We'll talk no more of these things; if you had reason, you'd be sorrowful at having let others so much into your secret Tell me, Hetty, what has become of all the Hurons, and why they let you roam about the p'int, as if you, too, was a prisoner?"

"I'm no prisoner, Deerslayer, but a free girl, and go when and where I please Nobody dare hurt me! If they did, God would be angry—as I can show them in the Bible No—no—Hetty Hutter is not afraid, she's in good hands The Hurons are up yonder in the woods, and keep a good watch on us both I'll answer for it, since all the women and children are on the lookout. Some are burying the body of the poor girl who was shot last night, so that the enemy and the wild beasts can't find it. I told 'em that father and mother lay in the lake,

but I wouldn't let them know in what part of it, for Judith and I don't want any of their heathensh company in our burying-ground."

"Ah's me!—Well, it is an awful dispatch to be standing here, alive and angry, and with the feelm's up and furious one hour, and then to be carried away at the next, and put out of sight of mankind in a hole in the 'arth! No one knows what will happen to him on a warpath, that's sartain."

Here the stirring of leaves and the cracking of dried twigs interrupted the discourse, and apprised Deerslayer of the approach of his enemies. The Hurons closed around the spot that had been prepared for the coming scene, and in the center of which the intended victim now stood, in a circle—the armed men being so distributed among the feeble members of the band, that there was no safe opening through which the prisoner could break. But the latter no longer contemplated flight; the recent trial having satisfied him of his inability to escape when pursued so closely by numbers. On the contrary, all his energies were aroused, in order to meet his expected fate, with a calmness that should do credit to his color and his manhood, one equally removed from recreant alarm and savage boasting.

When Rivenoak reappeared in the circle, he occupied his old place at the head of the area. Several of the elder warriors stood near him, but, now that the brother of Sumach had fallen, there was no longer any recognized chief present, whose influence and authority offered a dangerous rivalry to his own. Nevertheless, it is well known that little which could be called monarchical, or despotic, entered into the politics of the North American tribes, although the first colonists, bringing with them to this hemisphere the notions and opinions of their own countries, often dignified the chief men of those primitive nations with the titles of kings and princes. Hereditary influence did certainly exist; but there is much reason to believe it existed rather as a consequence of hereditary merit and acquired qualifications, than as a birthright. Rivenoak, *however, had not even this claim—having risen to consideration purely by the force of talents, sagacity, and, as Bacon expresses it, in relation to all distinguished statesmen, "by*

a union of great and mean qualities"; a truth of which the career of the profound Englishman himself furnishes so apt an illustration.

Next to arms, eloquence offers the great avenue to popular favor, whether it be in civilized or savage life; and Rivenoak had succeeded, as so many have succeeded before him, quite as much by rendering fallacies acceptable to his listeners, as by any profound or learned expositions of truth, or the accuracy of his logic. Nevertheless, he had influence; and was far from being altogether without just claims to its possession. Like most men who reason more than they feel, the Huron was not addicted to the indulgence of the mere ferocious passions of his people; he had been commonly found on the side of mercy in all the scenes of vindictive torture and revenge that had occurred in his tribe since his own attainment to power. On the present occasion, he was reluctant to proceed to extremities, although the provocation was so great, still it exceeded his ingenuity to see how that alternative could well be avoided. Sumach resented her rejection more than she did the deaths of her husband and brother, and there was little probability that the woman would pardon a man who had so unequivocally preferred death to her embraces. Without her forgiveness there was scarce a hope that the tribe could be induced to overlook its loss, and even to Rivenoak, himself, much as he was disposed to pardon, the fate of our hero now appeared to be almost hopelessly sealed.

When the whole band was arrayed around the captive, a grave silence, so much the more threatening from its profound quiet, pervaded the place. Deerslayer perceived that the women and boys had been preparing splinters of the fat pine roots, which he well knew were to be stuck into his flesh and set in flames, while two or three of the young men held the thongs of bark with which he was to be bound. The smoke of a distant fire announced that the burning brands were in preparation, and several of the elder warriors passed their fingers over the edges of their tomahawks, as if to prove their keenness and temper. Even the knives seemed loosened in their sheaths, impatient for the bloody and merciless work to begin.

"Killer of the Deer," recommenced Rivenoak, certainly without any signs of sympathy or pity in his manner, though with calmness and dignity; "Killer of the Deer, it is time that any people knew their minds. The sun is no longer over our heads; tired of waiting on the Hurons, he has begun to fall near the pines on this side of the valley. He is travelling fast towards the country of our French fathers, it is to warn his children that their lodges are empty, and that they ought to be at home. The roaming wolf has his den, and he goes to it when he wishes to see his young. The Iroquois are not poorer than the wolves. They have villages, and wigwams, and fields of corn; the good spirits will be tired of watching them alone. My people must go back and see to their own business. There will be joy in the lodges when they hear our whoop from the forest! It will be a sorrowful whoop, when it is understood, grief will come after it. There will be one scalp-whoop, but there will be only one. We have the fur of the Muskrat, his body is among the fishes. Deerslayer must say whether another scalp shall be on our pole. Two lodges are empty, a scalp, living or dead, is wanted at each door."

"Then take 'em dead, Huron," firmly, but altogether without dramatic boasting, returned the captive. "My hour is come, I do suppose, and what must be, must. If you are bent on the tortur', I'll do my indavors to bear up ag'in it, though no man can say how far his natur' will stand pain, until he's been tried."

"The pale-face cur begins to put his tail between his legs!" cried a young and garrulous savage, who bore the appropriate title of the Corbeau Rouge; a *sobriquet* he had gained from the French, by his facility in making unseasonable noises, and an undue tendency to hear his own voice; "he is no warrior, he has killed the Loup Cervier when looking behind him not to see the flash of his own rifle. He grunts like a hog already; when the Huron women begin to torment him, he will cry like the young of the catamount. He is a Delaware woman, dressed in the skin of a Yengeese!"

"Have your say, young man, have your say," returned Deerslayer, unmoved, "you know no better, and I can overlook it. Talking may aggravate women, but can hardly make

knives sharper, fire hotter, or rifles more certain."

Rivenoak now interfered, reproving the Red Crow for his premature interference, and then directing the proper persons to bind the captive. This expedient was adopted, not from any apprehensions that he would escape, or from any necessity, that was yet apparent, of his being unable to endure the torture with his limbs free, but from an ingenious design of making him feel his helplessness, and of gradually sapping his resolution, by undermining it, as it might be, little by little. Deerslayer offered no resistance. He submitted his arms and his legs, freely if not cheerfully, to the ligaments of bark which were bound around them, by order of the chief, in a way to produce as little pain as possible. These directions were secret, and given in a hope that the captive would finally save himself from any serious bodily suffering, by consenting to take the Sumach for a wife. As soon as the body of Deerslayer was withed in bark sufficiently to create a lively sense of helplessness, he was literally carried to a young tree and bound against it, in a way that effectually prevented him from moving, as well as from falling. The hands were laid flat against the legs, and thongs were passed over all, in a way nearly to incorporate the prisoner with the tree. His cap was then removed, and he was left half-standing, half-sustained by his bonds, to face the coming scene in the best manner he could.

Previously to proceeding to anything like extremities, it was the wish of Rivenoak to put his captive's resolution to the proof by renewing the attempt at a compromise. This could be effected only in one manner, the acquiescence of the Sumach being indispensably necessary to a compromise of her right to be revenged. With this view, then, the woman was next desired to advance, and to look to her own interest; no agent being considered as efficient as the principal herself in this negotiation. The Indian females, when girls, are usually mild and submissive, with musical tones, pleasant voices, and merry laughs; but toil and suffering generally deprive them of most of these advantages by the time they have reached an age which the Sumach had long before passed. To render their voices

harsh, it would seem to require active, malignant passions, though, when excited, their screams can rise to a sufficiently conspicuous degree of discordancy to assert their claim to possess this distinctive peculiarity of the sex. The Sumach was not altogether without feminine attraction, however, and had so recently been deemed handsome in her tribe, as not to have yet learned the full influence that time and exposure produce on man. as well as on woman. By an arrangement of Rivenoak's, some of the women around her had been employing the time in endeavoring to persuade the bereaved widow that there was still a hope Deerslayer might be prevailed on to enter her wigwam in preference to entering the world of spirits, and thus, too, with a success that previous symptoms scarcely justified. All this was the result of a resolution on the part of the chief to leave no proper means unemployed, in order to get the greatest hunter that was then thought to exist in all that region transferred to his own nation, as well as a husband for a woman who he felt would be likely to be troublesome, were any of her claims to the attention and care of the tribe overlooked.

In conformity with this scheme, the Sumach had been secretly advised to advance into the circle, and to make her appeal to the prisoner's sense of justice before the band had recourse to the last experiment. The woman, nothing loth, consented, for there was some such attraction, in becoming the wife of a noted hunter, among the females of the tribes, as is experienced by the sex in more refined life, when they bestow their hands on the affluent. As the duties of a mother were thought to be paramount to all other considerations, the widow felt none of that embarrassment in preferring her claims, to which even a female fortune-hunter among ourselves might be liable. When she stood forth before the whole party, therefore, the children that she led by the hand fully justified all she did.

"You see me before you, cruel pale-face," the woman commenced, "your spirit must tell you my errand. I have found you; I cannot find le Loup Cervier, nor the Panther; I have looked for them, in the lake, in the woods, in the clouds. I cannot say where they have gone."

"No man knows, good Sumach, no man knows," interposed the captive. "When the spirit leaves the body it passes into a world beyond our knowledge, and the wisest way, for them that are left behind, is to hope for the best. No doubt both your warriors have gone to the happy hunting-grounds, and at the proper time you will see 'em ag'in in their improved state. The wife and sister of braves must have looked forward to some such termination of their 'arthly careers'."

"Cruel pale-face, what had my warriors done that you should slay them? They were the best hunters and the boldest young men of their tribe; the Great Spirit intended that they should live until they withered like the branches of the hemlock, and fell of their own weight."

"Nay, nay, good Sumach," interrupted the Deerslayer, whose love of truth was too indomitable to listen to such hyperbole with patience, even though it came from the torn breast of a widow,—"*Nay, nay, good Sumach, this is a little out-doing red-skin privileges. Young man was neither, any more than you can be called a young woman; and as to the Great Spirit's intending that they should fall otherwise than they did, that's a grievous mistake, inasmuch as what the Great Spirit intends is certain to come to pass. Then, ag'in, it's plain enough neither of your fr'nds did me any harm, I raised my hand ag'in 'em on account of what they were striving to do, rather than what they did. This is nat'ral law, 'to do, lest you should be done by.'*"

"It is so. Sumach has but one tongue, she can tell but one story. The pale-face struck the Hurons, lest the Hurons should strike him. The Hurons are a just nation, they will forget it. The chiefs will shut their eyes, and pretend not to have seen it. The young men will believe the Panther and the Lynx have gone to far-off hunts, and the Sumach will take her children by the hand, and go into the lodge of the pale-face, and say, 'See; these are *your* children—they are also mine, feed us, and we will live with you.'"

"The tams are onadmissible, woman; and, though I feel for your losses, which must be hard to bear, the tams cannot be accepted. As to givin' you ven'son, in case we lived near

enough together, that would be no great exploit; but as for becomin' your husband, and the father of your children, to be honest with you, I feel no callin' that-a-way."

"Look at this boy, cruel pale-face; he has no father to teach him to kill the deer, or to take scalps. See this girl; what young man will come to look for a wife in a lodge that has no head? There are more among my people in the Canadas, and the Killer of Deer will find as many mouths to feed as his heart can wish for."

"I tell you, woman," exclaimed Deerslayer, whose imagination was far from seconding the appeal of the widow, and who began to grow restive under the vivid pictures she was drawing, "all this is nothing to me. People and kindred must take care of their own fatherless, leaving them that have no children to their own loneliness. As for me, I have no offspring, and I want no wife. Now, go away, Sumach, leave me in the hands of your chiefs, for my color, and gifts, and natur' itself, cry out ag'in the idee of taking you for a wife."

It is unnecessary to expatiate on the effect of this downright refusal of the woman's proposals. If there was anything like tenderness in her bosom,—and no woman was, probably, ever entirely without that feminine quality,—it all disappeared at this plain announcement. Fury, rage, mortified pride, and a volcano of wrath, burst out at one explosion, converting her into a sort of maniac, as it might be at the touch of a magician's wand. Without deigning a reply in words, she made the arches of the forest ring with her screams, and then flew forward at her victim, seizing him by the hair, which she appeared resolute to draw out by the roots. It was some time before her grasp could be loosened. Fortunately for the prisoner, her rage was blind, since his total helplessness left him entirely at her mercy; had it been better directed it might have proved fatal before any relief could have been offered. As it was, she did succeed in wrenching out two or three handfuls of hair, before the young men could tear her away from her victim.

The insult that had been offered to the Sumach was deemed an insult to the whole tribe; not so much, however, on account of any respect that was felt for the woman, as on

account of the honor of the Huron nation. Sumach, herself, was generally considered to be as acid as the berry from which she derived her name, and now that her great supporters, her husband and brother, were both gone, few cared about concealing their aversion. Nevertheless, it had become a point of honor to punish the pale-face who disdained a Huron woman, and more particularly, one who coolly preferred death to relieving the tribe from the support of a widow and her children. The young men showed an impatience to begin to torture, that Rivenoak understood; and as his elder associates manifested no disposition to permit any longer delay, he was compelled to give the signal for the infernal work to proceed.

#### CHAPTER XXIX

20 "The ugly bear now mudded not the stake,  
Nor how the cruel mastiffs do him tear,  
The stag lay still, unroused from the brake,  
The foamy boar feared not the hunter's spear  
All thing was still in desert, bush, and briar."

LORD DORSET

It was one of the common expedients of the savages, on such occasions, to put the nerves of their victims to the severest proofs. On the other hand, it was a matter of Indian pride, to betray no yielding to terror, or pain; but for the prisoner to provoke his enemies to such acts of violence as would soonest produce death. Many a warrior had been known to bring his own sufferings to a more speedy termination by taunting reproaches and reviling language, when he found that his physical system was giving way under the agony of sufferings, produced by a hellish ingenuity, that might well eclipse all that has been said of the infernal devices of religious persecution. This happy expedient of taking refuge from the ferocity of his foes, in their passions, was denied Deerslayer, however, by his peculiar notions of the duty of a white man, and he had stoutly made up his mind to endure everything, in preference to disgracing his color.

No sooner did the young men understand that they were at liberty to commence, than some of the boldest and most forward among them sprang into the arena, tomahawk in hand. Here they prepared to throw that dangerous

weapon, the object being to strike the tree as near as possible to the victim's head, without absolutely hitting him. This was so hazardous an experiment, that none but those who were known to be exceedingly expert with the weapon were allowed to enter the lists at all, lest an early death might interfere with the expected entertainment. In the truest hands, it was seldom that the captive escaped injury in these trials, and it often happened that death followed, even when the blow was not premeditated. In the particular case of our hero, Rivenoak and the older warriors were apprehensive that the example of the Panther's fate might prove a motive with some fiery spirit, suddenly to sacrifice his conqueror, when the temptation of effecting it in precisely the same manner, and possibly with the identical weapon with which the warrior had fallen, offered This circumstance, of itself, rendered the ordeal of the tomahawk doubly critical for the Deerslayer

It would seem, however, that all who now entered what we shall call the lists, were more disposed to exhibit their own dexterity than to resent the deaths of their comrades. Each prepared himself for the trial, with the feelings of rivalry, rather than with the desire for vengeance, and for the first few minutes, the prisoner had little more connection with the result, than grew out of the interest that necessarily attached itself to a living target. The young men were eager, instead of being fierce, and Rivenoak thought he still saw signs of being able to save the life of the captive, when the vanity of the young men had been gratified, always admitting that it was not sacrificed to the delicate experiments that were about to be made.

The first youth who presented himself for the trial was called the Raven, having as yet had no opportunity of obtaining a more warlike sobriquet. He was remarkable for high pretension, rather than for skill, or exploits, and those who knew his character thought the captive in imminent danger when he took his stand, and poised the tomahawk. Nevertheless, the young man was good-natured, and no thought was uppermost in his mind other than the desire to make a better cast than any of his fellows. Deerslayer got an inkling of this

warrior's want of reputation, by the injunctions that he had received from the seniors; who, indeed, would have objected to his appearing in the arena at all, but for an influence derived from his father, an aged warrior of great merit, who was then in the lodges of the tribe. Still, our hero maintained an appearance of self-possession. He had made up his mind that his hour was come, and it would have been a mercy, instead of a calamity, to fall by the unsteadiness of the first hand that was raised against him. After a suitable number of flourishes and gesticulations, that promised much more than he could perform, the Raven let the tomahawk quit his hand. The weapon whirled through the air with the usual evolutions, cut a chip from the sapling to which the prisoner was bound, within a few inches of his cheek, and stuck in a large oak that grew several yards behind him. This was decidedly a bad effort, and a common sneer proclaimed as much, to the great mortification of the young man. On the other hand, there was a general, but suppressed murmur of admiration, at the steadiness with which the captive stood the trial. The head was the only part he could move, and this had been purposely left free, that the tormentors might have the amusement, and the tormented endure the shame, of dodging, and otherwise attempting to avoid the blows. Deerslayer disappointed these hopes, by a command of nerve that rendered his whole body as immovable as the tree to which it was bound. Nor did he even adopt the natural and usual expedient of shutting his eyes: the firmest and oldest warrior of the red-men never having more disdainfully denied himself this advantage, under similar circumstances.

The Raven had no sooner made his unsuccessful and puerile effort, than he was succeeded by le Daum-Mose, or the Moose; a middle-aged warrior, who was particularly skilful in the use of the tomahawk, and from whose attempt the spectators confidently looked for gratification. This man had none of the good-nature of the Raven, but he would gladly have sacrificed the captive to his hatred of the pale-faces generally, were it not for the greater interest he felt in his own success as one particularly skilful in the use of this weapon. He

took his stand quietly, but with an air of confidence, poised his little axe but a single instant, advanced a foot with a quick motion, and threw. Deerslayer saw the keen instrument whirling towards him, and believed all was over; still, he was not touched. The tomahawk had actually bound the head of the captive to the tree, by carrying before it some of his hair, having buried itself deep beneath the soft bark. A general yell expressed the delight of the spectators, and the Moose felt his heart soften a little towards the prisoner, whose steadiness of nerve alone enabled him to give this evidence of his consummate skill.

Le Daim-Mose was succeeded by the Bounding Boy, or *le Garçon qui Bondi*, who came leaping into the circle like a hound, or a goat at play. This was one of those elastic youths, whose muscles seemed always in motion, and who either affected, or who from habit was actually unable to move in any other manner, than by showing the antics just mentioned. Nevertheless, he was both brave and skilful, and had gained the respect of his people by deeds in war as well as success in the hunts. A far nobler name would long since have fallen to his share, had not a Frenchman of rank inadvertently given him this *sobriquet*, which he religiously preserved as coming from his great father, who lived beyond the wide salt lake. The Bounding Boy skipped about in front of the captive, menacing him with his tomahawk, now on one side, and now on another, and then again in front, in the vain hope of being able to extort some sign of fear by this parade of danger. At length Deerslayer's patience became exhausted by all this mummery, and he spoke, for the first time since the trial had actually commenced.

"Throw away, Huron!" he cried, "or your tomahawk will forget its ar'n'd. Why do you keep loping about like a fa'a'n that's showing its dam how well it can skip, when you're a warrior grown, yourself, and a warrior grown defies you and all your silly antics? Throw, or the Huron gals will laugh in your face."

Although not intended to produce such an effect, the last words aroused the "Bounding" warrior to fury. The same nervous excitability which rendered him so active in his person, made it difficult to repress his feelings, and

the words were scarcely past the lips of the speaker, than the tomahawk left the hand of the Indian. Nor was it cast without good-will, and a fierce determination to slay. Had the intention been less deadly, the danger might have been greater. The aim was uncertain, and the weapon glanced near the cheek of the captive, slightly cutting the shoulder in its evolutions. This was the first instance in which any other object, than that of terrifying the prisoner, and of displaying skill, had been manifested, and the Bounding Boy was immediately led from the arena, and was warmly rebuked for his intemperate haste, which had come so near defeating all the hopes of the band.

To this irritating person succeeded several other young warriors, who not only hurled the tomahawk but who cast the knife, a far more dangerous experiment, with reckless indifference, yet they always manifested a skill that prevented any injury to the captive. Several times Deerslayer was grazed, but in no instance did he receive what might be termed a wound. The unflinching firmness with which he faced his assailants, more especially in the sort of rally with which this trial terminated, excited a profound respect in the spectators, and when the chiefs announced that the prisoner had well withstood the trials of the knife and the tomahawk, there was not a single individual in the band who really felt any hostility towards him, with the exception of Sumach and the Bounding Boy. These two discontented spirits got together, it is true, feeding each other's ire, but, as yet, their malignant feelings were confined very much to themselves, though there existed the danger that the others, ere long, could not fail to be excited by their own efforts into that demoniacal state which usually accompanied all similar scenes among the red-men.

Ruvenok now told his people that the pale-face had proved himself to be a man. He might live with the Delawares, but he had not been made woman with that tribe. He wished to know whether it was the desire of the Hurons to proceed any further. Even the gentlest of the females, however, had received too much satisfaction in the late trials to forego their expectations of a gratifying exhibition, and there was but one voice in the request to pro-

ceed. The politic chief, who had some such desire to receive so celebrated a hunter into his tribe as a European minister has to devise a new and available means of taxation, sought every plausible means of arresting the trial in season, for he well knew, if permitted to go far enough to arouse the more ferocious passions of the tormentors, it would be as easy to dam the waters of the great lakes of his own region as to attempt to arrest them in their bloody career. He therefore called four or five of the best marksmen to him, and bid them put the captive to the proof of the rifle, while, at the same time, he cautioned them touching the necessity of their maintaining their own credit, by the closest attention to the manner of exhibiting their skill.

When Deerslayer saw the chosen warriors step into the circle with their arms prepared for service, he felt some such relief as the miserable sufferer, who has long endured the agonies of disease, feels at the certain approach of death. Any trifling variance in the aim of this formidable weapon would prove fatal, since, the head being the target, or rather the point it was desired to graze without injury, an inch or two of difference in the line of projection, must at once determine the question of life or death.

In the torture by the rifle there was none of the latitude permitted that appeared in the case of even Gesler's apple, a hair's-breadth being, in fact, the utmost limits that an expert marksman would allow himself on an occasion like this. Victims were frequently shot through the head by too eager or unskilful hands, and it often occurred that, exasperated by the fortitude and taunts of the prisoner, death was dealt intentionally in a moment of ungovernable irritation. All this Deerslayer well knew, for it was in relating the traditions of such scenes, as well as of the battles and victories of their people, that the old men beguiled the long winter evenings in their cabins. He now fully expected the end of his career, and experienced a sort of melancholy pleasure in the idea that he was to fall by a weapon as much beloved as the rifle. A slight interruption, however, took place before the business was allowed to proceed.

Hetty Hutter witnessed all that passed, and

the scene at first had pressed upon her feeble mind in a way to paralyze it entirely; but, by this time, she had rallied, and was growing indignant at the unmerited suffering the Indians were inflicting on her friend. Though timid, and shy as the young of the deer, on so many occasions, this right-feeling girl was always intrepid in the cause of humanity, the lessons of her mother, and the impulses of her own heart,—perhaps we might say the promptings of that unseen and pure spirit that seemed ever to watch over and direct her actions—uniting to keep down the apprehensions of woman, and to impel her to be bold and resolute. She now appeared in the circle, gentle, feminine, even bashful in mien, as usual, but earnest in her words and countenance, speaking like one who knew herself to be sustained by the high authority of God.

"Why do you torment Deerslayer, red-men?" she asked. "What has he done that you trifle with his life, who has given you the right to be his judges? Suppose one of your knives or tomahawks had hit him, what Indian among you all could cure the wound you would make? Besides, in harming Deerslayer, you injure your own friend, when father and Hurry Harry came after your scalps, he refused to be of the party, and stayed in the canoe by himself. You are tormenting your friend in tormenting this young man!"

The Hurons listened with grave attention, and one among them, who understood English, translated what had been said into their native tongue. As soon as Rivenoak was made acquainted with the purport of her address, he answered it in his own dialect, the interpreter conveying it to the girl in English.

"My daughter is very welcome to speak," said the stern old orator, using gentle intonations, and smiling as kindly as if addressing a child—"the Hurons are glad to hear her voice; they listen to what she says. The Great Spirit often speaks to men with such tongues. This time her eyes have not been open wide enough to see all that has happened. Deerslayer did not come for our scalps, that is true; why did he not come? Here they are, on our heads; the warlocks are ready to be taken hold of; a bold enemy ought to stretch out his hand to seize them. The Iroquois are too great a



nation to punish men that take scalps. What they do themselves, they like to see others do. Let my daughter look around her, and count my warriors. Had I as many hands as four warriors, their fingers would be fewer than my people, when they came into your hunting-grounds. Now, a whole hand is missing. Where are the fingers? Two have been cut off by this pale-face; my Hurons wish to see if he did this by means of a stout heart, or by treachery, like a skulking fox, or like a leaping panther."

"You know yourself, Huron, how one of them fell. I saw it, and you all saw it, too. 'Twas too bloody to look at, but it was not Deerslayer's fault. Your warrior sought his life, and he defended himself. I don't know whether the good book says that it was right, but all men will do that. Come, if you want to know which of you can shoot best, give Deerslayer a rifle, and then you will find how much more expert he is than any of your warriors; yes, than *all* of them together!"

Could one have looked upon such a scene with indifference, he would have been amused at the gravity with which the savages listened to the translation of this unusual request. No taunt, no smile mingled with their surprise, for Hetty had a character and a manner too soundly to subject her infirmity to the mockings of the rude and ferocious. On the contrary, she was answered with a respectful attention.

"My daughter does not always talk like a chief at a council fire," returned Ruvenook, "or she would not have said this. Two of my warriors have fallen by the blows of our prisoner, their grave is too small to hold a third. The Hurons do not like to crowd their dead. If there is another spirit about to set out for the far-off world, it must not be the spirit of a Huron, it must be the spirit of a pale-face. Go, daughter, and sit by Sumach, who is in grief, let the Huron warriors show how well they can shoot, let the pale-face show how little he cares for their bullets."

Hetty's mind was unequal to a sustained discussion, and, accustomed to defer to the directions of her seniors, she did as told, seating herself passively on a log by the side of the Sumach, and averting her face from the painful scene that was occurring within the circle.

The warriors, as soon as this interruption

had ceased, resumed their places, and again prepared to exhibit their skill, as there was a double object in view, that of putting the constancy of the captive to the proof, and that of showing how steady were the hands of the marksmen under circumstances of excitement. The distance was small, and, in one sense, safe. But in diminishing the distance taken by the tormentors, the trial to the nerves of the captive was essentially increased. The face of Deerslayer, indeed, was just removed sufficiently from the ends of the guns to escape the effects of the flash, and his steady eye was enabled to look directly into their muzzles, as it might be, in anticipation of the fatal messenger that was to issue from each. The cunning Hurons well knew this fact, and scarce one levelled his piece without first causing it to point as near as possible at the forehead of the prisoner, in the hope that his fortitude would fail him, and that the band would enjoy the triumph of seeing a victim quail under their ingenious cruelty. Nevertheless, each of the competitors was still careful not to injure, the disgrace of striking prematurely being second only to that of failing altogether in attaining the object. Shot after shot was made, all the bullets coming in close proximity to the Deerslayer's head, without touching it. Still, no one could detect even the twitching of a muscle on the part of the captive, or the slightest winking of an eye. This indomitable resolution, which so much exceeded everything of its kind that any present had before witnessed, might be referred to three distinct causes. The first was resignation to his fate, blended with natural steadiness of deportment, for our hero had calmly made up his mind that he must die, and preferred this mode to any other; the second was his great familiarity with this particular weapon, which deprived it of all the terror that is usually connected with the mere form of the danger; and the third was this familiarity carried out in practice, to a degree so nice as to enable the intended victim to tell, within an inch, the precise spot where each bullet must strike, for he calculated its range by looking in at the bore of the piece. So exact was Deerslayer's estimation of the line of fire, that his pride of feeling finally got the better of his resignation, and, when five

or six had discharged their bullets into the trees, he could not refrain from expressing his contempt at their want of hand and eye.

"You may call this shooting, Mingos," he exclaimed, "but we've squaws among the Delawares, and I have known Dutch gals on the Mohawk, that could outdo your greatest ind-  
10 divors. Ondo these arms of mine, put a rifle into my hands, and I'll pin the thinnest warlock in your party to any tree you can show me; and this at a hundred yards: ay, or at two hundred, if the object can be seen, nineteen shots in twenty or, for that matter, twenty in twenty, if the piece is creditable and trusty!"

A low menacing murmur followed this cool taunt; the ire of the warriors kindled at listening to such a reproach from one who so far disdained their efforts as to refuse even to wink, when a rifle was discharged as near his face as could be done without burning it. 20 Rven oak perceived that the moment was critical, and, still retaining his hope of adopting so noted a hunter into his tribe, the politic old chief interposed in time, probably, to prevent an immediate resort to that portion of the torture which must necessarily have produced death, through extreme bodily suffering, if in no other manner. Moving into the center of the irritated group, he addressed them with his usual wily logic and plausible manner, at  
30 once suppressing the fierce movement that had commenced

"I see how it is," he said "We have been like the pale-faces when they fasten their doors at night, out of fear of the red-man. They use so many bars that the fire comes and burns them before they can get out. We have bound the Deerslayer too tight, the thongs keep his limbs from shaking, and his eyes from shutting. Loosen him, let us see what his own body is  
40 really made of."

It is often the case, when we are thwarted in a cherished scheme, that any expedient, however unlikely to succeed, is gladly resorted to, in preference to a total abandonment of the project. So it was with the Hurons. The proposal of the chief found instant favor; and several hands were immediately at work, cutting and tearing the ropes of bark from the body of our hero. In half a minute, Deerslayer  
50 stood as free from bonds, as when, an hour

before, he had commenced his flight on the side of the mountain. Some little time was necessary that he should recover the use of his limbs, the circulation of the blood having been checked by the tightness of the ligatures, and this was accorded to him by the politic Rven oak, under the pretense that his body would be more likely to submit to apprehension, if its true tone were restored, though  
10 really with a view to give time to the fierce passions which had been awakened in the bosoms of his young men, to subside. This *ruse* succeeded; and Deerslayer, by rubbing his limbs, stamping his feet, and moving about, soon regained the circulation;—recovering all his physical powers, as effectually as if nothing had occurred to disturb them.

It is seldom men think of death in the pride of their health and strength. So it was with Deerslayer. Having been helplessly bound, and, as he had every reason to suppose, so lately on the very verge of the other world, to find himself so unexpectedly liberated, in possession of his strength, and with a full command of limb, acted on him like a sudden restoration to life, reanimating hopes that he had once absolutely abandoned. From that instant all his plans changed. In this, he simply obeyed a law of nature, for while we have  
20 wished to represent our hero as being resigned to his fate, it has been far from our intention to represent him as anxious to die. From the instant that his buoyancy of feeling revived, his thoughts were keenly bent on the various projects that presented themselves as modes of evading the designs of his enemies, and he again became the quick-witted, ingenious, and determined woodsman, alive to all his own powers and resources. The change was so great that his mind resumed its elasticity, and, no longer thinking of submission, it dwelt  
30 only on the devices of the sort of warfare in which he was engaged.

As soon as Deerslayer was released, the band divided itself in a circle around him, in order to hedge him in; and the desire to break down his spirit grew in them, precisely as they saw proofs of the difficulty there would be in subduing it. The honor of the band was now involved in the issue; and even the sex lost all  
40 its sympathy with suffering, in the desire to

save the reputation of the tribe. The voices of the girls, soft and melodious as nature had made them, were heard mingling with the menaces of the men; and the wrongs of Sumach suddenly assumed the character of injuries inflicted on every Huron female. Yielding to this rising tumult, the men drew back a little, signifying to the females that they left the captive, for a time, in their hands, it being a common practice, on such occasions, for the women to endeavor to throw the victim into a rage by their taunts and revilings, and then to turn him suddenly over to the men in a state of mind that was little favorable to resisting the agony of bodily suffering. Nor was this party without the proper instruments for effecting such a purpose. Sumach had a notoriety as a scold; and one or two crones, like the She Bear, had come out with the party, most probably as the conservators of its decency and moral discipline, such things occurring in savage as well as civilized life. It is unnecessary to repeat all that ferocity and ignorance could invent for such a purpose, the only difference between this outbreking of feminine anger, and a similar scene among ourselves, consisting in the figures of speech and the epithets, the Huron women calling their prisoner by the names of the lower and least respected animals that were known to themselves.

But Deerslayer's mind was too much occupied to permit him to be disturbed by the abuse of excited hags; and their rage necessarily increasing with his indifference, as his indifference increased with their rage, the furies soon rendered themselves impotent by their own excesses. Perceiving that the attempt was a complete failure, the warriors interfered to put a stop to this scene; and thus so much the more, because preparations were now seriously making for the commencement of the real tortures, or that which would put the fortitude of the sufferer to the test of severe bodily pain. A sudden and unlooked-for announcement, that proceeded from one of the lookouts, a boy ten or twelve years old, however, put a momentary check to the whole proceedings. As this interruption has a close connection with the *dénouement* of our story, it shall be given in a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER XXX

"So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems  
Of that which is from that which seems;  
But other harvest here  
Than that which peasant's scythe demands,  
Was gathered in by sterner hands,  
With bayonet, blade, and spear."

SCOTT

It exceeded Deerslayer's power to ascertain what had produced the sudden pause in the movements of his enemies, until the fact was revealed in the due course of events. He perceived that much agitation prevailed among the women in particular, while the warriors rested on their arms, in a sort of dignified expectation. It was plain no alarm was excited, though it was not equally apparent that a friendly occurrence produced the delay. Rivenoak was evidently apprised of all, and by a gesture of his arm he appeared to direct the circle to remain unbroken, and for each person to await the issue in the situation he, or she, then occupied. It required but a minute or two to bring an explanation of this singular and mysterious pause, which was soon terminated by the appearance of Judith, on the exterior of the line of bodies, and her ready admission within its circle.

If Deerslayer was startled by this unexpected arrival, well knowing that the quick-witted girl could claim none of that exemption from the penalties of captivity that was so cheerfully accorded to her feeble-minded sister, he was equally astonished at the guise in which she came. All her ordinary forest attire, neat and becoming as this usually was, had been laid aside for the brocade that has been already mentioned, and which had once before wrought so great and magical an effect in her appearance. Nor was this all. Accustomed to see the ladies of the garrison, in the formal, gala attire of the day, and familiar with the more critical niceties of these matters, the girl had managed to complete her dress, in a way to leave nothing strikingly defective in its details, or even to betray an incongruity that would have been detected by one practiced in the mysteries of the toilet. Head, feet, arms, hands, bust, and drapery, were all in harmony, as female attire was then deemed attractive and harmonious; and the end she aimed at,

that of imposing on the uninstructed senses of the savages, by causing them to believe their guest was a woman of rank and importance, might well have succeeded with those whose habits had taught them to discriminate between persons. Judith, in addition to her rare native beauty, had a singular grace of person, and her mother had imparted enough of her own deportment to prevent any striking or offensive vulgarity of manner; so that, sooth-  
10 to say, the gorgeous dress might have been worse bestowed in nearly every particular. Had it been displayed in a capital, a thousand might have worn it, before one could have been found to do more credit to its gay colors, glossy satins, and rich laces, than the beautiful creature whose person it now aided to adorn.

The effect of such an apparition had not been miscalculated. The instant Judith found herself within the circle, she was, in a degree, compensated for the fearful personal risk she ran, by the unequivocal sensation of surprise and admiration produced by her appearance. The grim old warriors uttered their favorite exclamation, "Hugh!" The younger men were still more sensibly overcome, and even the women were not backward in letting open manifestations of pleasure escape them. It was  
20 seldom that these untutored children of the forest had ever seen any white female above the commonest sort, and, as to dress, never before had so much splendor shone before their eyes. The gayest uniforms of both French and English seemed dull compared with the luster of the brocade, and while the rare personal beauty of the wearer added to the effect produced by its hues, the attire did not fail to adorn that beauty in a way which surpassed even the hopes of its wearer. Deerslayer him-  
30 self was astounded, and this quite as much by the brilliant picture the girl presented, as at the indifference to consequences with which she had braved the danger of the step she had taken. Under such circumstances, all waited for the visitor to explain her object, which to most of the spectators seemed as inexplicable as her appearance.

"Which of these warriors is the principal chief?" demanded Judith of Deerslayer, as soon as she found it was expected that she

should open the communication; "my errand is too important to be delivered to any of inferior rank. First explain to the Hurons what I say; then give an answer to the question I have put."

Deerslayer quietly complied, his auditors greedily listening to the interpretation of the first words that fell from so extraordinary a vision. The demand seemed perfectly in character for one who had every appearance of an exalted rank herself. Rivenoak gave an appropriate reply, by presenting himself before his fair visitor in a way to leave no doubt that he was entitled to all the consideration he claimed.

"I can believe this, Huron," resumed Judith, enacting her assumed part with a steadiness and dignity that did credit to her powers of imitation, for she strove to impart to her manner the condescending courtesy she had once observed in the wife of a general officer at a similar though a more amicable scene: "I can believe you to be the principal person of this party, I see in your countenance the marks of thought and reflection. To you, then, I must make my communication."

"Let the Flower of the Woods speak," returned the old chief courteously, as soon as her address had been translated so that all might understand it. "If her words are as pleasant as her looks, they will never quit my ears, I shall hear them long after the winter of Canada has killed the flowers, and frozen all the speeches of summer."

This admiration was grateful to one constituted like Judith, and contributed to aid her self-possession, quite as much as it fed her vanity. Smiling involuntarily, or in spite of her wish to seem reserved, she proceeded in her plot.

"Now, Huron," she continued, "listen to my words. Your eyes tell you that I am no common woman. I will not say I am queen of this country; *she* is afar off, in a distant land; but under our gracious monarchs, there are many degrees of rank, one of these I fill. What that rank is precisely, it is unnecessary for me to say, since you would not understand it. For that information you must trust your eyes. You see what I am; you must *feel* that in listening to my words, you listen to one who can be your friend, or your enemy, as you treat her."

This was well uttered, with a due attention to manner, and a steadiness of tone that was really surprising, considering all the circumstances of the case. It was well, though simply rendered into the Indian dialect, too, and it was received with a respect and gravity that augured favorably for the girl's success. But Indian thought is not easily traced to its sources. Judith waited with anxiety to hear the answer, filled with hope even while she doubted. Ruven oak was a ready speaker, and he answered as promptly as comported with the notions of Indian decorum, that peculiar people seeming to think a short delay respectful, inasmuch as it manifests that the words already heard have been duly weighed.

"My daughter is handsomer than the wild roses of Ontario, her voice is pleasant to the ear as the song of the wren," answered the cautious and wily chief, who of all the band stood alone in not being fully imposed on by the magnificent and unusual appearance of Judith; but who distrusted even while he wondered "the humming-bird is not much larger than the bee, yet its feathers are as gay as the tail of the peacock. The Great Spirit sometimes puts very bright clothes on very little animals. Still, He covers the moose with coarse hair. These things are beyond the understanding of poor Indians, who can only comprehend what they see and hear. No doubt my daughter has a very large wigwam, somewhere about the lake; the Hurons have not found it, on account of their ignorance?"

"I have told you, chief, that it would be useless to state my rank and residence, inasmuch as you would not comprehend them. You must trust to your eyes for this knowledge, what red-man is there who cannot see? This blanket that I wear is not the blanket of a common squaw; these ornaments are such as the wives and daughters of chiefs only appear in. Now, listen and hear why I have come alone among your people, and hearken to the errand that has brought me here. The Yengeese have young men as well as the Hurons; and plenty of them, too; thus you well know."

"The Yengeese are as plenty as the leaves on the trees! Thus every Huron knows and feels."

"I understand you, chief. Had I brought a party with me, it might have caused trouble. My young men and your young men would have looked angrily at each other; especially had my young men seen that pale-face bound for the tortures. He is a great hunter, and is much loved by all the garrisons, far and near. There would have been blows about him, and the trail of the Iroquois back to the Canadas would have been marked with blood."

"There is so much blood on it now," returned the chief, gloomily, "that it blinds our eyes. My young men see that it is all Huron."

"No doubt; and more Huron blood would be spilt, had I come surrounded with pale-faces. I have heard of Ruven oak, and have thought it would be better to send him back in peace to his village, that he might leave his women and children behind him, if he then wished to come for our scalps, we would meet him. He loves animals made of ivory, and little rifles. See, I have brought some with me to show him. I am his friend. When he has packed up these things among his goods, he will start for his village, before any of my young men can overtake him, and then he will show his people in Canada what riches they can come to seek, now that our great fathers, across the Salt Lake, have sent each other the war-hatchet. I will lead back with me, this great hunter, of whom I have need to keep my house in venison."

Judith, who was sufficiently familiar with Indian phraseology, endeavored to express her ideas in the sententious manner common to those people, and she succeeded even beyond her own expectations. Deerslayer did her full justice in the translation, and thus so much the more readily, since the girl carefully abstained from uttering any direct untruth, a homage she paid to the young man's known aversion to falsehood, which he deemed a meanness altogether unworthy of a white man's gifts. The offering of the two remaining elephants, and of the pistols already mentioned, one of which was all the worse for the recent accident, produced a lively sensation among the Hurons generally, though Ruven oak received it coldly, notwithstanding the delight with which he had first discovered the probable existence of a creature with two tails. In a

word, this cool and sagacious savage was not so easily imposed on as his followers; and with a sentiment of honor that half the civilized world would have deemed supererogatory, he declined the acceptance of a bribe that he felt no disposition to earn by a compliance with the donor's wishes.

"Let my daughter keep her two-tailed hog to eat when venison is scarce," he drily answered; "and the little gun, which has two muzzles. The Hurons will kill deer when they are hungry, and they have long rifles to fight with. This hunter cannot quit my young men now, they wish to know if he is as stout-hearted as he boasts himself to be."

"That I deny, Huron," interrupted Deerslayer with warmth, "yes, that I downright deny, as ag'in truth and reason. No man has heard me *boast*, and no man shall, though ye flay me alive, and then roast the quivering flesh, with your own infernal devices and cruelties! I may be humble, and misfortunate, and your prisoner, but I'm no boaster, by my very gifts."

"My young pale-face *boasts* he is no boaster," returned the crafty chief. "*He must be right* I hear a strange bird singing. It has very rich feathers. No Huron ever before saw such feathers! They will be ashamed to go back to their village and tell their people that they let their prisoner go on account of the song of this strange bird, and not be able to give the name of the bird. They do not know how to say whether it is a wren or a cat-bird. This would be a great disgrace, my young men would not be allowed to travel in the woods without taking their mothers with them to tell them the name of the birds!"

"You can ask my name of your prisoner," returned the girl. "It is Judith; and there is a great deal of the history of Judith in the pale-faces' best book, the Bible. If I am a bird of fine feathers, I have also my name."

"No," answered the wily Huron, betraying the artifice he had so long practiced, by speaking in English, with tolerable accuracy, "I not ask prisoner. He tired, want rest. I ask my daughter, with feeble-mind. She speak truth. Come here, daughter; you answer. *Your name, Hetty?*"

"Yes, that's what they call me," returned

the girl, "though it's written Esther, in the Bible."

"He write *him* in Bible, too! All write in Bible. No matter—what *her* name?"

"That's Judith, and it's so written in the Bible, though father sometimes called her Jude. That's my sister Judith, Thomas Hutter's daughter—Thomas Hutter, whom you called the Muskrat; though he was *no* muskrat, but a man, like yourselves—he lived in a house on the water, and that was enough for *you*!"

A smile of triumph gleamed on the hard-wrinkled countenance of the chief, when he found how completely his appeal to the truth-loving Hetty had succeeded. As for Judith, herself, the moment her sister was questioned, she saw that all was lost; for no sign, or even entreaty, could have induced the right-feeling girl to utter a falsehood. To attempt to impose a daughter of the Muskrat on the savages as a princess, or a great lady, she knew would be idle, and she saw her bold and ingenious expedient for liberating the captive fail, through one of the simplest and most natural causes that could be imagined. She turned her eye on Deerslayer, therefore, as if imploring him to interfere, to save them both.

"It will not do, Judith," said the young man, in answer to this appeal, which he understood, though he saw its uselessness. "It will not do. 'Twas a bold idea, and fit for a general's lady; but yonder Mingo—" Ruvenook had withdrawn to a little distance, and was out of ear-shot—"but yonder Mingo is an uncommon man, and not to be deceived by any unnatural sarcumventions. Things must come afore him in their right order, to draw a cloud afore *his* eyes! 'Twas too much to attempt making him fancy that a queen, or a great lady, lived in these mountains, and no doubt he thinks the fine clothes you wear are some of the plunder of your own father—or, at least, of him who once passed for your father; as quite likely it was, if all they say is true."

"At all events, Deerslayer, my presence here will save you for a time. They will hardly attempt torturing you before my face!"

"Why not, Judith? Do you think they will treat a woman of the pale-faces more tenderly than they treat their own? It's true that your sex will most likely save you from the tor-

ments, but it will not save your liberty, and may not save your scalp. I wish you hadn't come, my good Judith; it can do no good to me, while it may do great harm to yourself."

"I can share your fate," the girl answered, with generous enthusiasm. "They shall not injure you while I stand by, if in my power to prevent it—besides——"

"Besides what, Judith? What means have you to stop Indian cruelties, or to avert Indian deviltries?"

"None, perhaps, Deerslayer," answered the girl, with firmness; "but I can suffer with my friends—die with them if necessary."

"Ah! Judith—suffer you may, but die you will not until the Lord's time shall come. It's little likely that one of your sex and beauty will meet with a harder fate than to become the wife of a chief, if indeed your white inclinations can stoop to match with an Indian. 'T would have been better had you stayed in the ark, or the castle—but what has been done, is done. You was about to say something, when you stopped at 'besides?'"

"It might not be safe to mention it here, Deerslayer," the girl hurriedly answered, moving past him carelessly, that she might speak in a low tone; "half an hour is all in all to us. None of your friends are idle."

The hunter replied merely by a grateful look. Then he turned towards his enemies, as if ready again to face the torments. A short consultation had passed among the elders of the band, and by this time they also were prepared with their decision. The merciful purpose of Rivenoak had been much weakened by the artifice of Judith, which, failing of its real object, was likely to produce results the very opposite of those she had anticipated. This was natural, the feeling being aided by the resentment of an Indian, who found how near he had been to becoming the dupe of an inexperienced girl. By this time Judith's real character was fully understood—the widespread reputation of her beauty contributing to the exposure. As for the unusual attire, it was confounded with the profound mystery of the animals with two tails, and, for the moment, lost its influence.

When Rivenoak, therefore, faced the captive again, it was with an altered countenance.

He had abandoned the wish of saving him, and was no longer disposed to retard the more serious part of the torture. This change of sentiment was, in effect, communicated to the young men, who were already eagerly engaged in making their preparations for the contemplated scene. Fragments of dried wood were rapidly collected near the sapling, the splinters which it was intended to thrust into the flesh of the victim, previously to lighting, were all collected, and the thongs were already produced, that were again to bind him to the tree. All this was done in profound silence, Judith watching every movement with breathless expectation, while Deerslayer himself stood seemingly as unmoved as one of the pines of the hills. When the warriors advanced to bind him, however, the young man glanced at Judith, as if to inquire whether resistance or submission were most advisable. By a significant gesture she counselled the last, and, in a minute, he was once more fastened to the tree, a helpless object of any insult or wrong that might be offered. So eagerly did everyone now act, that nothing was said. The fire was immediately lighted in the pile, and the end of all was anxiously expected.

It was not the intention of the Hurons absolutely to destroy the life of their victim by means of fire. They designed merely to put his physical fortitude to the severest proofs it could endure, short of that extremity. In the end, they fully intended to carry his scalp with them into their village, but it was their wish first to break down his resolution, and to reduce him to the level of a complaining sufferer. With this view, the pile of brush and branches had been placed at a proper distance, or one at which it was thought the heat would soon become intolerable, though it might not be immediately dangerous. As often happened, however, on these occasions, this distance had been miscalculated, and the flames began to wave their forked tongues in a proximity to the face of the victim that would have proved fatal in another instant, had not Herry rushed through the crowd, armed with a stick, and scattered the blazing pile in a dozen directions. More than one hand was raised to strike the presumptuous intruder to the earth, but the chiefs prevented the blows, by reminding

their irritated followers of the state of her mind Hetty, herself, was insensible to the risk she ran; but, as soon as she had performed this bold act, she stood looking about her, in frowning resentment, as if to rebuke the crowd of attentive savages for their cruelty.

"God bless you, dearest sister, for that brave and ready act!" murmured Judith, herself unnerved so much as to be incapable of exertion, "Heaven itself has sent you on its  
10 holy errand."

"'Twas well-meant, Judith," rejoined the victim; "'twas excellently meant, and 'twas timely, though it may prove onnely in the end! What is to come to pass must come to pass soon, or 'twill quickly be too late. Had I drawn in one mouthful of that flame in breathing, the power of man couldn't save my life, and you see that, *this time*, they've so bound  
20 my forehead as not to leave my head the smallest chance. 'Twas well meant, but it might have been more marcful to let the flames act their part."

"Cruel, heartless Hurons!" exclaimed the still indignant Hetty, "would you burn a man and a Christan as you would burn a log of wood? Do you never read your Bibles? or do you think God will forget such things?"

A gesture from Ruvenok caused the scattered brands to be collected, fresh wood was brought, even the women and children busying themselves eagerly in the gathering of dried sticks. The flame was just kindling a second time when an *Indian female* pushed through the circle, advanced to the heap, and with her foot dashed aside the lighted twigs in time to prevent the conflagration. A yell followed this second disappointment, but when the offender turned towards the circle, and presented the countenance of Hist, it was  
30 succeeded by a common exclamation of pleasure and surprise. For a minute, all thought of pursuing the business in hand was forgotten, and young and old crowded around the girl, in haste to demand an explanation of her sudden and unlooked-for return. It was at this critical instant that Hist spoke to Judith in a low voice, placed some small object, unseen, in her hand, and then turned to meet the salutations of the Huron girls, with whom she  
40 was personally a great favorite. Judith recov-

ered her self-possession, and acted promptly. The small, keen-edged knife, that Hist had given to the other, was passed by the latter into the hands of Hetty, as the safest and least-suspected medium of transferring it to Deerslayer. But the feeble intellect of the last defeated the well-grounded hopes of all three. Instead of first cutting loose the hands of the victim, and then concealing the knife in his clothes, in readiness for action at the most available instant, she went to work herself, with earnestness and simplicity, to cut the thongs that bound his head, that he might not again be in danger of inhaling flames. Of course this deliberate procedure was seen, and the hands of Hetty were arrested ere she had more than liberated the upper portion of the captive's body, not including his arms, below the elbows. This discovery at once pointed distrust towards Hist, and, to Judith's surprise, when questioned on the subject, that spirited girl was not disposed to deny her agency in what had passed.

"Why should I not help the Deerslayer?" the girl demanded, in the tones of a firm-minded woman. "He is the brother of a Delaware chief, my heart is all Delaware. Come forth, miserable Briarthorn, and wash the Iroquois paint from your face, stand before the Hurons, the crow that you are, you would eat the carrion of your own dead, rather than starve. Put him face to face with Deerslayer, chiefs and warriors, I will show you how great a knave you have been keeping in your tribe."

This bold language, uttered in their own dialect, and with a manner full of confidence, produced a deep sensation among the Hurons. Treachery is always liable to distrust; and, though the recreant Briarthorn had endeavored to serve the enemy well, his exertions and assiduites had gained for him little more than toleration. His wish to obtain Hist for a wife had first induced him to betray her and his own people, but serious rivals to his first project had risen up among his new friends, weakening still more their sympathies with treason. In a word, Briarthorn had been barely permitted to remain in the Huron encampment, where he was as closely and as  
50 jealously watched as Hist herself, seldom appearing before the chiefs, and sedulously keep-



ing out of view of Deerslayer, who, until this moment, was ignorant even of his presence. Thus summoned, however, it was impossible to remain in the background. "Wash the Iroquois paint from his face," he did not; for when he stood in the center of the circle, he was so disguised in these new colors, that, at first, the hunter did not recognize him. He assumed an air of defiance, notwithstanding, and haughtily demanded what any could say against "Briarthorn."

"Ask yourself that," continued Hist, with spirit, though her manner grew less concentrated, and there was a slight air of abstraction that became observable to Deerslayer and Judith, if to no others "Ask that of your own heart, sneaking woodchuck of the Delawares; come not here with the face of an innocent man. Go look in the spring, see the colors of your enemies on your lying skin, and then come back and boast how you ran from your tribe, and took the blanket of the French for your covering! Paint yourself as bright as a humming-bird, you will still be black as the crow"

Hist had been so uniformly gentle while living with the Hurons, that they now listened to her language with surprise. As for the delinquent, his blood boiled in his veins, and it was well for the pretty speaker that it was not in his power to execute the revenge he burned to inflict on her, in spite of his pretended love.

"Who wishes Briarthorn?" he sternly asked. "If this pale-face is tired of life, if afraid of Indian torments, speak, Rivenoak, I will send him after the warriors we have lost."

"No, chief; no, Rivenoak," eagerly interrupted Hist. "The Deerslayer fears nothing, least of all, a crow! Unbind him—cut his withes—place him face to face with this cawing bird; then let us see which is tired of life."

Hist made a forward movement, as if to take a knife from a young man, and perform the office she had mentioned, in person; but an aged warrior interposed, at a sign from Rivenoak. This chief watched all the girl did, with distrust, for, even while speaking in her most boastful language, and in the steadiest manner, there was an air of uncertainty and expectation about her, that could not escape so close an observer. She acted well; but two or three of

the old men were equally satisfied that it was merely acting. Her proposal to release Deerslayer, therefore, was rejected; and the disappointed Hist found herself driven back from the sapling, at the very moment she fancied herself about to be successful. At the same time, the circle, which had got to be crowded and confused, was enlarged, and brought once more into order. Rivenoak now announced the intention of the old men again to proceed; the delay having been continued long enough, and leading to no result.

"Stop, Huron, stay, chiefs!" exclaimed Judith, scarce knowing what she said, or why she interposed, unless to obtain time, "for God's sake, a single minute longer——"

The words were cut short by another and still more extraordinary interruption. A young Indian came bounding through the Huron ranks, leaping into the very center of the circle, in a way to denote the utmost confidence, or temerity bordering on fool-hardiness. Five or six sentinels were still watching the lake at different and distant points, and it was the first impression of Rivenoak that one of these had come in with tidings of import. Still, the movements of the stranger were so rapid, and his war-dress, which scarcely left him more drapery than an antique statue, had so little distinguishing about it, that, at the first moment, it was impossible to ascertain whether he were friend or foe. Three leaps carried this warrior to the side of Deerslayer, whose withes were cut in the twinkling of an eye, with a quickness and precision that left the prisoner perfect master of his limbs. Not till this was effected, did the stranger bestow a glance on any other object, then he turned, and showed the astonished Hurons the noble brow, fine person, and eagle eye of a young warrior in the paint and panoply of a Delaware. He held a rifle in each hand, the butts of both resting on the earth, while from one dangled its proper pouch and horn. This was Killdeer, which, even as he looked boldly and in defiance on the crowd around him, he suffered to fall back into the hands of its proper owner. The presence of two armed men, though it was in their midst, startled the Hurons. Their rifles were scattered about against the different trees, and their only weapons were their knives and

tomahawks. Still, they had too much self-possession to betray fear. It was little likely that so small a force would assail so strong a band, and each man expected some extraordinary proposition to succeed so decisive a step. The stranger did not seem disposed to disappoint them, he prepared to speak.

"Hurons," he said, "this earth is very big. The great lakes are big, too; there is room beyond them for the Iroquois; there is room 10 for the Delawares on this side. I am Chungachgook, the son of Uncas; the kinsman of Tamenund. This is my betrothed, that pale-face is my friend. My heart was heavy when I missed him; I followed him to your camp to see that no harm happened to him. All the Delaware girls are waiting for Wah, they wonder that she stays away so long. Come, let us say farewell, and go on our path."

"Hurons, this is your mortal enemy, the 20 Great Serpent of them you hate!" cried Briarthorn. "If he escape, blood will be in your moccasin prints, from this spot to the Canadas. I am all Huron."

As the last words were uttered, the traitor cast his knife at the naked breast of the Delaware. A quick movement of the arm on the part of Hist, who stood near, turned aside the blow, the dangerous weapon burying its point in a pine. At the next instant, a similar weapon 30 glanced from the hand of the Serpent, and quivered in the recreant's heart. A minute had scarcely elapsed from the moment in which Chungachgook bounded into the circle, and that in which Briarthorn fell, like a log, dead in his tracks. The rapidity of events had prevented the Hurons from acting; but this catastrophe permitted no farther delay. A common exclamation followed, and the whole party was in motion. At this instant, a sound, 40 unusual to the woods was heard, and every Huron, male and female, paused to listen, with ears erect and faces filled with expectation. The sound was regular and heavy, as if the earth were struck with beetles. Objects became visible among the trees of the background, and a body of troops was seen advancing with measured tread. They came upon the charge, the scarlet of the king's livery

shining among the bright green foliage of the forest.

The scene that followed is not easily described. It was one in which wild confusion, despair, and frenzied efforts, were so blended, as to destroy the unity and distinctness of the action. A general yell burst from the enclosed Hurons, it was succeeded by the hearty cheers of England. Still, not a musket or rifle was fired, though that steady, measured tramp continued, and the bayonet was seen gleaming in advance of a line that counted nearly sixty men. The Hurons were taken at a fearful disadvantage. On three sides was the water, while their formidable and trained foes cut them off from flight on the fourth. Each warrior rushed for his arms, and then all on the point, man, woman, and child, eagerly sought the covers. In this scene of confusion and dismay, however, nothing could surpass the discretion and coolness of Deerslayer. His first care was to place Judith and Hist behind trees, and he looked for Herry, but she had been hurried away in the crowd of Huron women. This effected, he threw himself on a flank of the retreating Hurons, who were inclining off towards the southern margin of the point in the hope of escaping through the water. Deerslayer watched his opportunity, and finding 50 two of his recent tormentors in a range, his rifle first broke the silence of the terrific scene. The bullet brought both down at one discharge. This drew a general fire from the Hurons, and the rifle and war-cry of the Serpent were heard in the clamor. Still the trained men returned no answering volley, the whoop and piece of Hurry alone being heard on their side, if we except the short, prompt word of authority, and that heavy, measured, and menacing tread. Presently, however, the shrieks, groans, and denunciations that usually accompany the use of the bayonet, followed. That terrible and deadly weapon was glutted in vengeance. The scene that succeeded was one of those, of which so many have occurred in our own times, in which neither age nor sex forms an exemption to the lot of a savage warfare.

1803 ~ *Ralph Waldo Emerson* ~ 1882

EMERSON's chief office for his day, as lecturer, essayist, and poet, was the enfranchisement and stimulation of the inward spirit of the individual. A liberated Puritan, he sought to emphasize the spiritual in life, and he exalted conscience and will. To the Calvinists, man had been innately evil; to the Unitarians, in opposition to Calvinism, man was innately good. Emerson, in the next stage, found divinity in him and in nature. He believed, because of this divinity, in the value of inner revelation rather than of formal argument. Nature he worshipped for its spiritual content. He deferred to books only in so far as they showed by their spiritual inspiration that throughout history "the mind is one." He rarely read books as wholes. Neither did he defer to traditions of the past as such. He wished to give men the habit of thinking for themselves. His master idea was that man must rely on himself and develop to his own best. He taught the duty of self-development, self-culture, and "a self-trust which is a trust in God himself." Emerson felt the influence of the moral and ethical preoccupations of earlier New England and the new scientific interest in the contemporary world. He believed that "the laws of physics translate the laws of ethics."

Emerson led the quiet, uneventful life of a thinker and teacher. He was born May 25, 1803, in Boston, coming from a long line of pioneers, patriots, and ministers, the descendants of men who had founded the town of Concord, Massachusetts. His father, minister of the First Church, Boston, established the library of the Boston Athenaeum but died in 1811, leaving his widow with six children and no money. The mother, who, like most mothers of great men, seems to have been a superior woman, was obliged to take boarders to help educate and support her children. Emerson entered the Latin school at ten and at fourteen entered Harvard, obtaining his lodging free in return for carrying messages for the president, and earning three-fourths of the cost of his board by acting as waiter at the college commons. Later in the course he tutored backward students. His ability was soon noted and he took prizes for declamation and dissertations. Generally he preferred to devote more attention to his private reading than to the routine studies. In 1821 he was graduated somewhat above the middle of his class, and, when others had refused, he was made class poet, as later were Holmes and Lowell. After graduation Emerson taught in Boston from 1821 to 1825, paying debts and aiding his mother financially. He had been brought up a Unitarian and in 1825 entered the Unitarian divinity school at Harvard. In 1826, at the age of twenty-three, he was admitted to the Unitarian ministry.

His early ecclesiastical career was brief. He spent the winter of 1826-1827 at St. Augustine, Florida, for the sake of his health. After preaching here and there, chiefly in Cambridge, he was made in 1829 an associate pastor of the Second Church in Boston, which had been the church of the Mathers, but was now Unitarian. In the same year he married Miss Ellen Tucker. She died in 1831. In 1832 a change in his religious views caused him to leave the pastorate. For one thing, he did not wish to administer the Lord's Supper, since it did not mean to him what it was supposed to mean. For another, he was disturbed at the thought of "praying to order." But especially he wished a hard and fast demarcation between the religious and the secular in daily life to be given up.

Soon after, urged by returning ill health, he sailed for Europe in a small brig, landing at Malta. He visited Italy, France, and England with A. H. Clough, the English poet. He sought out Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Carlyle, with the third of whom he formed a lasting friendship recorded in a famous correspondence. He was not Europeanized like Irving and Longfellow by his stay abroad, but the ideas he had from the English writers and from Goethe liberated him from old ways of thinking, and acquainted him with the idealistic philosophy of which Kant was the chief spokesman in Germany. Upon his return to America in 1833 he settled for the remainder of his life in Concord, also the home of Hawthorne, Alcott, and Thoreau. He had a small income from his first wife's estate and he did not need to work very hard or regularly.

In 1835 he married Lydia Jackson of Plymouth, and moved into a house of his own from the Old Manse which had been the home of his grandfather and was later the home of Hawthorne. He preached occasionally and lectured frequently, at first on science and travel, and then on the topics treated in his essays. This was the day of the lyceum and Emerson had great success as a lecturer. He is described as having a "radiant presence," a serene and quiet manner, and a fascinating voice. An atmosphere of purity and candor is said to have hung about his discussion of transcendental subjects. The pay for lectures was not then very great. He received perhaps ten or twenty or fifty dollars at most for a lecture, but lecturing was the nearest thing to a profession that he had. His favorite books are easily determined from the abundant allusions and anecdotes in his lectures. They were the Greek classics, Plato especially, the Bible, Shakespeare, Montaigne, Milton, and Goethe.

Most of Emerson's writings, except for a few poems, come from his middle life. He published anonymously in 1836 his first work, *Nature*, in which he tried to present a better balanced form of religion. Thus, with his Phi Beta Kappa oration on "The American Scholar" (1837), called by O. W. Holmes "our intellectual Declaration of Independence," and the Harvard "Divinity School Address" (1838), made him widely known as one who declared a new doctrine of plain living and high thinking. It was not long before he became the intellectual leader of the so-called

transcendental movement, mainly the German eighteenth-century idealistic philosophy in American form. He was the editor for a time (1842-1844) of *The Dial*, magazine of the transcendental movement, and was the indirect inspirer of many intellectual and social experiments, such as the Brook Farm enterprise (1841-1847) in which Hawthorne, G. W. Curtis, and Margaret Fuller joined, but from which Emerson held himself aloof.

In 1841 he issued *Essays, First Series*, and in 1844 his *Essays, Second Series*, from the material of many of his lectures. The latter had in their turn been made up from detached thoughts from his journals, in which he kept a diary of his intellectual life. In 1847 he issued the first volume of his poems containing his patriotic "Concord Hymn" and numerous poems of nature and human life. His verse, marked by a philosophic turn, often arose from meditations inspired by chance experience. Although he was an apostle of freedom in poetic form, which he deemed subordinate to thought, he hardly achieved it. Much of his verse follows conventions and is in regular meter and rhyme, though the rhymes are often careless and the lines harsh. His favorite form is the octosyllabic rhymed couplet. His poetry is condensed and thoughtful, but lacks artistic sense and controlling pattern, and he seems over-addicted to the ejaculatory. Those are not wanting, however, who think that his poetry will endure longer than his prose.

In 1847-1848 a second visit to Europe was spent in lecturing, in meeting distinguished people, and in studying men and manners in England and France. The lectures delivered in England were embodied later in *Representative Men* (1850) and his observations on English life in *English Traits* (1856), his most careful book.

New collections of essays, nearly all first composed as lectures, were *The Conduct of Life* (1860), *Society and Solitude* (1870), and *Letters and Social Aims* (1876). These presented the values of spirit, mind, and expression characteristic of his earlier work. Emerson's prose style is condensed and carefully distilled, marked by a metaphysical texture of thought and by many illustrations and anecdotes. He had an especial gift for formulating aphorisms, maxims, and precepts.

Emerson's views of life changed but little as he advanced in years. In 1870 he delivered at Harvard a course of lectures on *Natural History of Intellect* (not published until 1893). Having for years extended his lecture tours as far as the Mississippi, at sixty-eight he made a journey to California with a private party, and in the following year revisited England, France, and Italy, and journeyed as far as Egypt. On his return he was welcomed by his townsmen to a new home built by them after the destruction of his former home by fire. Again in Concord he continued his lecturing until he lost his memory. He died from pneumonia in his seventy-ninth year, April 27, 1882.

Emerson's personality carried authority. His audiences followed him intently even when they did not know what he meant. Something of his magic went with his

death. Like others of the transcendentalists, one of whose doctrines was that "being is better than doing," he was not active in practical politics or reform movements but preferred to remain self-dependent and aloof. Among his essays, however, there are many on political and social subjects, and Lowell said Emerson had great influence on those who fought in the Civil War.

To be a true poet, Emerson believed, one must live in harmony with divine law; he will thus become a medium for divine truth, which is universal. Genius is not eccentric but "a larger imbibing of the common heart," an "influx of the divine mind into our mind." The highest beauty "is the mark God sets upon virtue," and Beauty, Truth, and Goodness are "interchangeable," being "but different faces of the same All." "Expression is organic" not only with character but with thought. It is "not meters, but meter-making argument, that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that . . . it has an architecture of its own." Attend to the thought, the inspiration, and the form will look out for itself. The poet should not imitate nature, the reports of the senses, but an ideal divinely-inspired concept in his mind. Yet concrete facts are useful as symbols of spiritual ideas, and one may use the concrete American scene but only as a *means* of symbolizing the universal moral law transcending nationalities and time and space. The poet may be guided and inspired not only by the influx of the divine in his own individual mind but by the literature of the past in so far as it illustrates the fact that throughout history "the mind is One." Other poets reveal to him his own wealth, his own kinship with those who have been media of the oversoul. The poet should be a liberator and consoler. He should free us from bondage to matter by showing us that our distinctively human destiny is spiritual. He consoles us by teaching us to see particulars, including individual cases of suffering, in perspective; he teaches us to see "the permanent in the mutable and fleeting," to believe "what the years and the centuries say, against the hours."

The Centenary Edition, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (12 vols., 1903-1904), with a biographical introduction and notes by his son, E. W. Emerson, is the standard edition. Emerson's *Journals* were edited by E. W. Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes (1909-1914). Selections from these appear in Bliss Perry's *The Heart of Emerson's Journals* (1926). Later supplementations are *The Uncollected Writings: Essays, Addresses, Poems, Reviews, and Letters by Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited by Charles C. Bigelow (1912), and the *Uncollected Lectures by Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited by Clarence Gohdes (1932). Representative sermons may be found in *Young Emerson Speaks*, edited by A. C. McGiffert (1939). Emerson's correspondence (with Carlyle, Thoreau, John Sterling, W. H. Furness, and others) has been made available by editors in various volumes. A comprehensive collection of the correspondence is *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited by R. L. Rusk (6 vols., 1939).

Of the many biographies and works bearing on the life of Emerson, the following may be mentioned. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the *American Men of Letters Series* (1884); James E. Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (2 vols., 1887), the most detailed life and still standard; E. W.

Emerson, *Emerson in Concord* (1888), which tells of his father's home life; Elizabeth Luther Cary, *Emerson: Poet and Thinker* (1904); G. E. Woodberry, in the English Men of Letters Series (1907), a thoughtful literary treatment; Marie Dugard, *Ralph Waldo Emerson, sa Vie et son Œuvre* (1907), a laudatory European treatment; O. W. Firkins, *Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1915), includes a discussion of Emerson's authorship and philosophy. Recent more or less popular treatments are by R. M. Gay (1928); P. Russell (1929); Régis Michaud, *Emerson: the Enraptured Yankee*, translated from the French by G. Boas (1930). Mark Van Doren wrote of Emerson in *DAB* (1931), and Van Wyck Brooks published *The Life of Emerson* (1932).

H. C. Goddard's *Studies in New England Transcendentalism* (1908) affords a good background for a study of Emerson. The following are among the best of the innumerable critical articles that concern Emerson: Matthew Arnold in his *Discourses in America* (1885); J. R. Lowell, "Emerson: The Lecturer" in *My Study Windows* (1871); George Santayana in *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900); W. C. Brownell in *American Prose Masters* (1909); P. E. More in the *Cambridge History of American Literature*, I, 1917; S. P. Sherman in *Americans* (1922); S. M. Crothers, *Ralph Waldo Emerson How to Know Him* (1921); E. G. Sutchiff, *Emerson's Theories of Literary Expression* (1923); Norman Foerster in *Nature in American Literature* (1923), also in *American Criticism* (1928); Bliss Perry in *The Praise of Folly* (1923), also *Emerson Today* (1931); Régis Michaud, *L'Esthétique d'Emerson* (1927) which treats Emerson's philosophy; Paul Sakman, *Emerson's Geisteswelt* (1927); V. L. Parrington, in *Main Currents of American Thought* (1927); André Bruell, *Emerson et Thoreau* (1929); A. Kreymborg, in *Our Singing Strength* (1929); H. H. Clark, "Emerson and Science," *Philological Quarterly*, X, 225-260 (July, 1931); Ludwig Lewi-son, in *Expression in America* (1932); H. R. Zink, *Emerson's Use of the Bible* (1933); G. W. Allen, in *American Prosody* (1935); N. Dillaway, *Prophet of America Emerson and the Problems of Today* (1936).

For bibliographies, see G. W. Cooke, *A Bibliography of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1908), and *CHAL*, I (1917). G. S. Hubbell's *A Concordance to the Poems of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1932), is a useful reference work.

### THOUGHT

In this early poem Emerson rejoices in his feeling of spiritual superiority over the "crowd," a recurrent note among the Old World romantic poets.

I AM not poor, but I am proud,  
Of one inalienable right,  
Above the envy of the crowd,—  
Thought's holy light.

Better it is than gems or gold,  
And oh! it cannot die,  
But thought will glow when the sun grows old,  
And mix with Deity.

1823

1903

### GOOD-BYE

Written when the poet was a youth of twenty, and first published in James Freeman Clarke's *Western Messenger*. The "sylvan home" in which

he felt safe was the small house at Roxbury near Boston in which his mother then lived. The poem was written when he was teaching school in Boston. It contains many of his cardinal doctrines concerning nature, self-reliance, and the superiority of solitude over society. His son E. W. Emerson said that Emerson hardly tolerated these boyish verses in the later editions of his poems, thinking them over-misanthropic (*Emerson in Concord*, 29).

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home.  
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine  
Long through thy weary crowds I roam,  
A river-ark on the ocean brine,  
Long I've been tossed like the driven foam,  
But now, proud world! I'm going home.

Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face;  
To Grandeur with his wise grimace;  
To upstart Wealth's averted eye;  
To supple Office, low and hugh;

10

To crowded halls, to court and street;  
To frozen hearts and hasting feet;  
To those who go, and those who come,  
Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home.

I am going to my own hearthstone,  
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—  
A secret nook in a pleasant land,  
Whose groves the frolic faines planned,  
Where arches green, the livelong day, 20  
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,  
And vulgar feet have never trod  
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,  
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;  
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,  
Where the evening star so holy shines,  
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,  
At the sophist schools and the learned clan;  
For what are they all, in their high conceit,  
When man in the bush with God may meet? 30  
1823 1839

### WRITTEN IN NAPLES

The smooth flow and regularity of rhythm in this poem are unusual with Emerson. His wife, Ellen Tucker Emerson, referred to in the last line, died in 1831.

We are what we are made, each following day  
Is the Creator of our human mold  
Not less than was the first, the all-wise God  
Gilds a few points in every several life,  
And as each flower upon the fresh hillside,  
And every colored petal of each flower,  
Is sketched and dyed, each with a new design,  
Its spot of purple, and its streak of brown,  
So each man's life shall have its proper lights,  
And a few joys, a few peculiar charms, 10  
For him round in the melancholy hours  
And reconcile him to the common days.  
Not many men see beauty in the fogs  
Of close low pinewoods in a river town;  
Yet unto me not morn's magnificence,  
Nor the red rainbow of a summer eve,  
Nor Rome, nor joyful Paris, nor the halls  
Of rich men blazing hospitable light,  
Nor wit, nor eloquence,—no, nor even the  
song  
Of any woman that is now alive,— 20  
Hath such a soul, such divine influence,

Such resurrection of the happy past,  
As is to me when I behold the morn  
Ope in such low moist roadside, and beneath  
Peep the blue violets out of the black loam,  
Pathetic silent poets that sing to me  
Thine elegy, sweet singer, sainted wife.

1833

1883

### THE APOLOGY

For its underlying thought, the superiority of the lessons to be learned from nature over those to be learned from man, this poem may be compared with Wordsworth's "Expostulation and Reply" and "The Tables Turned" (1798).

THINK me not unkind and rude  
That I walk alone in grove and glen;  
I go to the god of the wood  
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I  
Fold my arms beside the brook;  
Each cloud that floated in the sky  
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,  
For the idle flowers I brought; 10  
Every aster in my hand  
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery  
But 'tis figured in the flowers,  
Was never secret history  
But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field  
Homeward brought the oxen strong;  
A second crop thine acres yield,  
Which I gather in a song. 20

1834

1847

### THE RHODORA

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?

First published in the *Western Messenger*, July, 1839. Emerson, like Bryant in "The Yellow Violet" and "The Fringed Gentian," replaces the rose or lily of older traditional poetry by an unbackneyed American flower. Unlike Bryant (or Lowell in "The Dandelion"), Emerson does not see the flower in his mind's eye, as if writing of it from a library; he comes upon it in a special place, at a special time, in a special mood. His line "Beauty is its own excuse for being," should be read with the



realization that he admired Plato, who inter fused Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, and held that the highest beauty must include the spiritual and the moral.

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,  
I found the fresh Rhodora<sup>1</sup> in the woods,  
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,  
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.  
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,  
Made the black water with their beauty gay;  
Here might the redbird come his plumes to  
cool,  
And court the flower that cheapens his array.

Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why 9  
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,  
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for  
seeing,  
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:  
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!  
I never thought to ask, I never knew.  
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose  
The selfsame Power that brought me there  
brought you.

1834

1839

## CONCORD HYMN

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE  
MONUMENT, JULY 4, 1837

The fight of the "embattled farmers" with the British at Concord was described by Emerson in his *Historical Discourse Delivered before the Citizens of Concord* (1835). In the *Selected Poems* of 1876, the hymn was given the title "Concord Fight." Emerson was not given to patriotic themes. The hymn is distinctively Emersonian only in the striking last line of the first quatrain. But it is a model of its kind in its flawless nobility of expression and sustained progress to its final lines. It is deservedly popular.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
Down the dark stream which seaward  
creeps.

<sup>1</sup> *Rhododendrum Rhodora* is the botanical name.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
We set today a votive stone;  
That memory may their deed redeem,  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

10

Spirit, that made those heroes dare  
To die, and leave their children free,  
Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

1836

1837

## THE HUMBLE-BEE

The suitability of the form of the poem to its subject should be noted, and also the sense it conveys of a hot summer's day. Of especial interest, too, are the number, variety, and felicity of Emerson's epithets for the bee, and his botanical references, which are derived from the vegetation and flora of his home region.

BURLY, dozing humble-bee,  
Where thou art is clime for me,  
Let them sail for Porto Rique,  
Far-off heats through seas to seek;  
I will follow thee alone,  
Thou animated torrid-zone!  
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,  
Let me chase thy waving lines;  
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,  
Singing over shrubs and vines.

10

Insect lover of the sun,  
Joy of thy dominion!  
Sailor of the atmosphere,  
Swimmer through the waves of air;  
Voyager of light and noon;  
Epicurean of June;  
Wait, I pray thee, till I come  
Within earshot of thy hum,—  
All without is martyrdom

When the south wind, in May days, 20  
With a net of shining haze  
Silvers the horizon wall,  
And with softness touching all,  
Tints the human countenance  
With a color of romance,  
And infusing subtle heats,  
Turns the sod to violets,  
Thou, in sunny solitudes,  
Rover of the underwoods,

The green silence dost displace  
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

30

Hot midsummer's petted crone,  
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone  
Tells of countless sunny hours,  
Long days, and solid banks of flowers,  
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound  
In Indian wildernesses found,  
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,  
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean  
Hath my insect never seen,  
But violets and bilberry bells,  
Maple-sap and daffodils,  
Grass with green flag half-mast high,  
Succory to match the sky,  
Columbine with horn of honey,  
Scented fern and agrimony,  
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue  
And brier-roses, dwelt among,  
All beside was unknown waste,  
All was picture as he passed.

40

Wiser far than human seer,  
Yellow-breeched philosopher!  
Seeing only what is fair,  
Sipping only what is sweet,  
Thou dost mock at fate and care,  
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat  
When the fierce northwestern blast  
Cools sea and land so far and fast,  
Thou already slumberest deep,  
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;  
Want and woe, which torture us,  
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

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1837

1839

## EACH AND ALL

The fundamental thought of this poem, which grew out of a casual outdoor experience, may be found in Emerson's *Nature* (iv) "Nature is a sea of forms radically alike and even unique. Nothing is quite beautiful alone, nothing but is beautiful in the whole. A single object is only so far beautiful as it suggests this universal grace." Instead of placing it first, which would have been the clearer method, Emerson preceded his central thought by a number of illustrations. As a rule he does not plan out the structure of his poems carefully.

LITTLE thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked  
clown

Of thee from the hilltop looking down,  
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,  
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;  
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,  
Deems not that great Napoleon  
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,  
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine  
height;

Nor knowest thou what argument  
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent. 10  
All are needed by each one;  
Nothing is fair or good alone.

I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,  
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;  
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;  
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,  
For I did not bring home the river and sky,—  
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.  
The delicate shells lay on the shore,  
The bubbles of the latest wave 20

Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,  
And the bellowing of the savage sea  
Greeted their safe escape to me.  
I wiped away the weeds and foam,  
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;  
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things  
Had left their beauty on the shore  
With the sun and the sand and the wild up-  
roar.

The lover watched his graceful maid,  
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed, 30  
Nor knew her beauty's best attire  
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.  
At last she came to his hermitage,  
Like the bird from the woodlands to the  
cage;—

The gay enchantment was undone,  
A gentle wife, but fairy none.  
Then I said, "I covet truth;  
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;  
I leave it behind with the games of youth":—  
As I spoke, beneath my feet 40  
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,  
Running over the club-moss burrs;  
I inhaled the violet's breath;  
Around me stood the oaks and firs;  
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;  
Over me soared the eternal sky,  
Full of light and of deity,

Again I saw, again I heard,  
The rolling river, the morning bird;—  
Beauty through my senses stole; 50  
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

1839

## THE PROBLEM

First published in *The Dial* for July, 1840. It may be that the poet here presents his personal problem, the conflict between his admiration and reverence for a clergyman and his unwillingness to be one. He resigned from the Unitarian ministry when he felt that he could not sincerely perform all that was expected of him. An entry in his *Journal* for August 28, 1838, reads "It is very grateful to my feelings to go into a Roman cathedral, yet I look as my countrymen do at the Roman priesthood. It is very grateful to me to go into an English church and hear the liturgy read, yet nothing would induce me to become an English priest." The main body of the poem, however, seems to be the exposition of a thesis concerning the relation of the formal and the spiritual rather than the statement of a problem. Its underlying thought is that all religions with their oracles, litanies, temples, statues, prophets, priests, emerge from the Divine in man. Man instinctively expresses his noblest ideals under the inspiration of the Universal Mind, or Over-soul, or Deity. The examples in the poem are cited as testifying to this truth.

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl,  
I love a prophet of the soul;  
And on my heart monastic aisles  
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles.  
Yet not for all his faith can see  
Would I that cowl'd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,  
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought  
His awful Jove young Phidias brought; 10  
Never from lips of cunning fell  
The thrilling Delphic oracle;<sup>1</sup>  
Out from the heart of nature rolled  
The burdens of the Bible old,  
The litanies of nations came,  
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,  
Up from the burning core below,—  
The canticles of love and woe:

<sup>1</sup> greatest of the Greek oracles, that of the Pythian Apollo at Delphi

The hand that rounded Peter's dome  
And groomed the aisles of Christian Rome 20  
Wrought in a sad sincerity;  
Himself from God he could not free;  
He builded better than he knew;—  
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's  
nest

Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?  
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,  
Painting with morn each annual cell?  
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds 30  
To her old leaves new myrads?  
Such and so grew these holy piles,  
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.  
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,  
As the best gem upon her zone,  
And Morning opes with haste her lids  
To gaze upon the Pyramids;  
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,  
As on its friends, with kindred eye,  
For out of Thought's interior sphere  
These wonders rose to upper air, 40  
And Nature gladly gave them place,  
Adopted them into her race,  
And granted them an equal date  
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass,  
Art might obey, but not surpass.  
The passive Master lent his hand  
To the vast soul that o'er him planned,  
And the same power that reared the shrine  
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within. 50  
Ever the fiery Pentecost<sup>1</sup>  
Girds with one flame the countless host,  
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,  
And through the priest the mind inspires.  
The word unto the prophet spoken  
Was writ on tables yet unbroken,  
The word by seers or sibyls<sup>2</sup> told,  
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,  
Still floats upon the morning wind,  
Still whispers to the willing mind. 60  
One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world hath never lost.  
I know what say the fathers wise,—  
The Book itself before me lies,

<sup>1</sup> fiftieth day after the Passover and the Crucifixion (see Acts 2)    <sup>2</sup> prophetesses

Old *Chrysostom*, beat Augustine,  
And he who blent both in his line,  
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,  
Taylor, the Shakspeare of divines,  
His words are music in my ear,  
I see his cowed portrait dear;  
And yet, for all his faith could see,  
I would not the good bishop be.

1839

1840

## From WOODNOTES

First published in *The Dial*, 1840. A long poem for Emerson. The second part is not included here. The portrait of the "forest seer" seems so like Thoreau as to have been inspired by him. Yet E. W. Emerson said of his father that the portrait was written before he came to know Thoreau (*Emerson in Concord*, 111).

I

1

WHEN the pine tosses its cones  
To the song of its waterfall tones,  
Who speeds to the woodland walks?  
To birds and trees who talks?  
Caesar of his leafy Rome,  
There the poet is at home.  
He goes to the riverside,—  
Not hook nor line hath he,  
He stands in the meadows wide,—  
Nor gun nor scythe to see  
Sure some god his eye enchants.  
What he knows nobody wants.  
In the wood he travels glad,  
Without better fortune had,  
Melancholy without bad  
Knowledge this man prizes best  
Seems fantastic to the rest.  
Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,  
Grass-buds and caterpillar-shrouds,  
Boughs on which the wild bees settle,  
Tints that spot the violet's petal,  
Why Nature loves the number five,  
And why the star-form she repeats.  
Lover of all things alive,  
Wonderer at all he meets,  
Wonderer chiefly at himself,  
Who can tell him what he is?  
Or how meet in human elf  
Coming and past eternities?

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10

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And such I knew, a forest seer,  
A minstrel of the natural year,  
Foreteller of the vernal ides,  
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,  
A lover true, who knew by heart  
Each joy the mountain dales impart:  
It seemed that Nature could not raise  
A plant in any secret place,  
In quaking bog, on snowy hill,  
Beneath the grass that shades the rill,  
Under the snow, between the rocks,  
In damp fields known to bird and fox,  
But he would come in the very hour  
It opened in its virgin bower,  
As if a sunbeam showed the place,  
And tell its long-descended race.  
It seemed as if the breezes brought him,  
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;  
As if by secret sight he knew  
Where, in far fields, the orchis grew.  
Many haps fall in the field  
Seldom seen by wishful eyes,  
But all her shows did Nature yield,  
To please and win this pilgrim wise.  
He saw the partridge drum in the woods,  
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;  
He found the tawny thrushes' broods;  
And the shy hawk did wait for him,  
What others did at distance hear,  
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,  
Was shown to this philosopher,  
And at his bidding seemed to come

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3

In unploughed Maine he sought the lumberers'  
gang  
Where from a hundred lakes young rivers  
sprang,  
He trode the unplanted forest floor, whereon  
The all-seeing sun for ages hath not shone,  
Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly  
bear,  
And up the tall mast<sup>1</sup> runs the woodpecker.  
He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds,  
The slight *Linnæa*<sup>2</sup> hang its twinborn heads,  
And blessed the monument of the man of  
flowers,

70

<sup>1</sup> tall pine tree    <sup>2</sup> a low prostrate vine-like plant, sometimes called twinflower

Which breathes his sweet fame through the  
 northern bowers,  
 He heard, when in the grove, at intervals,  
 With sudden roar the aged pine-tree falls,—  
 One crash, the death-hymn of the perfect  
 tree,

Declares the close of its green century.  
 Low lies the plant to whose creation went  
 Sweet influence from every element,  
 Whose living towers the years conspired to  
 build,

Whose giddy top the morning loved to gild.  
 Through these green tents, by eldest Nature  
 dressed, 80  
 He roamed, content alike with man and  
 beast.

Where darkness found him he lay glad at  
 night,  
 There the red morning touched him with its  
 light.

Three moons his great heart hum a hermit  
 made,

So long he roved at will the boundless shade.  
 The timid it concerns to ask their way,  
 And fear what foe in caves and swamps can  
 stray,

To make no step until the event is known,  
 And ills to come as evils past bemoan.  
 Not so the wise; no coward watch he keeps 90  
 To spy what danger on his pathway creeps;  
 Go where he will, the wise man is at home,  
 His hearth the earth,—his hall the azure dome,  
 Where his clear spirit leads him, there's his  
 road

By God's own light illumined and foreshowed.

## 4

"Twas one of the charmed days  
 When the genius of God doth flow;  
 The wind may alter twenty ways,  
 A tempest cannot blow;  
 It may blow north, it still is warm; 100  
 Or south, it still is clear;  
 Or east, it smells like a clover-farm,  
 Or west, no thunder fear;  
 The musing peasant, lowly great,  
 Beside the forest water sate;  
 The rope-like pine-roots crosswise grown  
 Composed the network of his throne,  
 The wide lake, edged with sand and grass,  
 Was burnished to a floor of glass,

Painted with shadows green and proud 120  
 Of the tree and of the cloud.

He was the heart of all the scene;  
 On him the sun looked more serene;  
 To hill and cloud his face was known,—  
 It seemed the likeness of their own;  
 They knew by secret sympathy  
 The public child of earth and sky  
 "You ask," he said, "what guide  
 Me through trackless thickets led,  
 Through thick-stemmed woodlands rough  
 and wide. 120

I found the water's bed.  
 The watercourses were my guide;  
 I travelled grateful by their side,  
 Or through their channel dry;  
 They led me through the thicket damp,  
 Through brake and fern, the beavers' camp,  
 Through beds of granite cut my road,  
 And their resistless friendship showed  
 The falling waters led me,  
 The foodful waters fed me, 130

And brought me to the lowest land,  
 Unerring to the ocean sand  
 The moss upon the forest bark  
 Was polestar when the night was dark;  
 The purple berries in the wood  
 Supplied me necessary food,  
 For Nature ever faithful is  
 To such as trust her faithfulness  
 When the forest shall mislead me,  
 When the night and morning lie, 140  
 When sea and land refuse to feed me,  
 'Twill be time enough to die;  
 Then will yet my mother yield  
 A pillow in her greenest field,  
 Nor the June flowers scorn to cover  
 The clay of their departed lover "

1840

## THE SNOW-STORM

Whittier used lines from this poem as a motto  
 for *Snow-Bound*. In content it is not distinctively  
 Emersonian, not moral or philosophical, but mainly  
 descriptive. Noteworthy are the felicitous lines  
 ending the first and second paragraphs.

ANNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,  
 Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,  
 Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air  
 Hides hills and woods, the river, and the  
 heaven,

And veils the farmhouse at the garden's end.  
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's  
feet

Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates  
sit

Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed  
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry. 10  
Out of an unseen quarry evermore  
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer  
Curves his white bastions with projected roof  
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.  
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work  
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he  
For number or proportion. Mockingly,  
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian<sup>1</sup> wreaths;  
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;  
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall, 20  
Maugre the farmer's sighs, and at the gate  
A tapering turret overtops the work  
And when his hours are numbered, and the  
world

Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,  
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art  
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,  
Built in an age, the mad wind's nightwork,  
The frolic architecture of the snow.

1841

## FORBEARANCE

E W Emerson thought it probable that his  
father had Thoreau in mind in this poem. Its  
preference for the avoidance of praise, as inadequate  
or patronizing, is not usual

HAST thou named all the birds without a gun?  
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?  
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?  
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?  
And loved so well a high behavior,  
In man or maid, that thou from speech re-  
frained,

Nobility more nobly to repay?

O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

1842

## GRACE

Although Emerson was the apostle of self-  
reliance, this poem testifies to his sense of the  
practical value of such curbs to freedom as he

<sup>1</sup> marble, noted for its fine quality and its whiteness,  
quarried in the island of Paros in the Aegean Sea

enumerates in line 3. The poem may be compared  
with the "Ode to Duty" of Wordsworth, in which,  
though his usual guides were high instincts and  
intuitions, he welcomes the restraining forces of  
conscience and duty

How much, preventing God, how much I  
owe

To the defenses thou hast round me set;

Example, custom, fear, occasion slow,—

These scorned bondmen were my parapet.

I dare not peep over this parapet

To gauge with glance the roaring gulf below,

The depths of sin to which I had descended,

Had not these me against myself defended.

1842

## HAMATREYA

A poem on man's thirst to possess land and on  
his transiency in the shadow of earth's might. The  
earth is not owned by man but he is the earth's  
and he returns to it. The original idea on which  
Emerson based the poem was Hindu, but his treat-  
ment gives it New England regionalization. The  
names in the opening line are those of early Con-  
cord settlers. Peter Bulkeley was one of the poet's  
own ancestors

BULKELEY, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam,  
Flint,

Possessed the land which rendered to their  
toil

Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool,  
and wood

Each of these landlords walked amidst his  
farm,

Saying, "'Tis mine, my children's and my  
name's

How sweet the west wind sounds in my own  
trees!

How graceful clumb those shadows on my  
hill!

I fancy these pure waters and the flags

Know me, as does my dog: we sympathize,

And, I affirm, my actions smack of the soil." 10

Where are these men? Asleep beneath their  
grounds:

And strangers, fond as they, their furrows  
plough.

Earth laughs in flowers, to see her boastful  
boys

Earth-proud, proud of the earth which is not  
theirs;

Who steer the plough, but cannot steer their  
feet

Clear of the grave.

They added ridge to valley, brook to pond,  
And sighed for all that bounded their do-  
main;

"This suits me for a pasture, that's my park,  
We must have clay, lime, gravel, granite-  
ledge, 20

And misty lowland, where to go for peat.

The land is well,—lies fairly to the south,

'Tis good, when you have crossed the sea and  
back,

To find the sitfast acres where you left them."

Ah! the hot owner sees not Death, who adds  
Him to his land, a lump of mould the more.

Hear what the Earth says—

#### EARTH-SONG

"Mine and yours;  
Mine, not yours.  
Earth endures;  
Stars abide—  
Stunne down in the old sea;  
Old are the shores;  
But where are old men?  
I who have seen much,  
Such have I never seen.

"The lawyer's deed  
Ran sure,  
In tail,<sup>1</sup>  
To them and to their heirs  
Who shall succeed,  
Without fail,  
Forevermore.

"Here is the land,  
Shaggy with wood,  
With its old valley,  
Mound and flood.  
But the heritors?—  
Fled like the flood's foam.  
The lawyer, and the laws,  
And the kingdom,  
Clean swept herefrom

"They called me theirs,  
Who so controlled me;  
Yet every one  
Wished to stay, and is gone.  
How am I theirs,  
If they cannot hold me,  
But I hold them?"

<sup>1</sup> limitation of ownership, entailment

When I heard the Earth-song,  
I was no longer brave,  
My avarice cooled  
Like lust in the chull of the grave.

80

1847

#### MERLIN

In this poem may be found many of Emerson's ideals concerning the poetic art, such as his preference for lofty spirituality over devotion to "rhythm and number." In the "rhyme of the poet modulates the king's affairs" he continues the old-world romantic assumption (to be found in Shelley, in the young Tennyson's "The Poet," and elsewhere) that the poet is a prophet and leader of progress. For Emerson's poetic theories and a list of studies of the subject, see H. H. Clark, *American Poets* (1936), 832-33.

#### I

THY trivial harp will never please  
Or fill my craving ear,  
Its chords should ring as blows the breeze,  
Free peremptory, clear  
No jingling serenader's art,  
Nor tinkle of piano strings,  
Can make the wild blood start  
In its mystic springs  
The jingly bard  
Must smite the chords rudely and hard, 10  
As with hammer or with mace,  
That they may render back  
Artful thunder, which conveys  
Secrets of the solar track,  
Sparks of the supersolar blaze.  
Merlin's blows are strokes of fate,  
Chiming with the forest tone,  
When boughs buffet boughs in the wood;  
Chiming with the gasp and moan  
Of the ice-imprisoned flood, 20  
With the pulse of manly hearts,  
With the voice of orators;  
With the din of city arts,  
With the cannonade of wars,  
With the marches of the brave;  
And prayers of might from martyrs' cave.

Great is the art,  
Great be the manners, of the bard.  
He shall not his brain encumber  
With the coil of rhythm and number; 30

But, leaving rule and pale forethought,  
He shall aye climb  
For his rhyme.

"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,  
"In to the upper doors,  
Nor count compartments of the floors,  
But mount to paradise  
By the stairway of surprise "

Blameless master of the games,  
King of sport that never shames,  
He shall daily joy dispense  
Hid in song's sweet influence.  
Things more cheerily live and go,  
What time the subtle mind  
Sings aloud the tune whereto  
Their pulses beat,  
And march their feet,  
And their members are combined.

By Sybarites<sup>1</sup> beguiled,  
He shall no task decline;  
Merlin's mighty line  
Extremes of nature reconciled,—  
Bereaved a tyrant of his will,  
And made the lion mild  
Songs can the tempest still,  
Scattered on the stormy air,  
Mold the year to far increase  
And bring in poetic peace

He shall not seek to weave,  
In weak, unhappy times,  
Efficacious rhymes;  
Wait his returning strength.  
Bird, that from the nadir's<sup>2</sup> floor  
To the zenith's top can soar,  
The soaring orbit of the muse exceeds that  
journey's length.  
Nor profane affect to hit  
Or compass that, by meddling wit,  
Which only the propitious mind  
Publishes when 'tis inclined.  
There are open hours  
When the God's will salhes free,  
And the dull idiot might see  
The flowing fortunes of a thousand years,—

<sup>1</sup> dwellers in the ancient Greek city of Sybaris in Southern Italy, noted for their devotion to luxury and pleasure <sup>2</sup> the opposite of zenith, or the point directly below the point where one stands

Sudden, at unawares,  
Self-moved, fly-to the doors,  
Nor sword of angels could reveal  
What they conceal.

## II

The rhyme of the poet  
Modulates the king's affairs;  
Balance-loving Nature  
Made all things in pairs.  
To every foot its antipode;  
Each color with its counter glowed;  
To every tone beat answering tones,  
Higher or graver;  
Flavor gladly blends with flavor,  
Leaf answers leaf upon the bough;  
And match the paired cotyledons.<sup>1</sup>  
Hands to hands, and feet to feet,  
In one body grooms and brides;  
Eldest rite, two married sides  
In every mortal meet.

Light's far furnace shines,  
Smelting balls and bars,  
Forging double stars,  
Glittering twins and trines.  
The animals are sick with love,  
Lovesick with rhyme;  
Each with all propitious Time  
Into chorus wove

Like the dancers' ordered band,  
Thoughts come also hand in hand;  
In equal couples mated,  
Or else alternated,  
Adding by their mutual gage,  
One to other, health and age.  
Solitary fancies go  
Short-lived wandering to and fro,  
Most like to bachelors,  
Or an ungiven maid,  
Not ancestors,  
With no posterity to make the lie afraid,  
Or keep truth undecayed  
Perfect-paired as eagle's wings,  
Justice is the rhyme of things,  
Trade and counting use  
The selfsame tuneful muse,  
And Nemesis,<sup>2</sup>

Who with even matches odd,

<sup>1</sup> seed leaves <sup>2</sup> in Greek mythology, the goddess of retributive justice and punishment



Who athwart space redresses 120  
The partial wrong,  
Fills the just period,  
And finishes the song.

Subtle rhymes, with run rife,  
Murmur in the house of life,  
Sung by the Sisters<sup>1</sup> as they spin;  
In perfect time and measure they  
Build and unbuild our echoing clay,  
As the two twilights of the day  
Fold us music-drunken in 130

1847

## MUSKETAQUID

The accuracy and clearness of the details of landscape in this poem may be noted. Musketaquid is the Indian name of the Concord River.

BECAUSE I was content with these poor fields,  
Low, open meads, slender and sluggish streams,  
And found a home in haunts which others scorned,

The partial wood-gods overpaid my love,  
And granted me the freedom of their state,  
And in their secret senate have prevailed  
With the dear, dangerous lords that rule our life,

Made moon and planets parties to their bond,  
And through my rock-like, solitary wont 9  
Shot million rays of thought and tenderness.  
For me, in showers, in sweeping showers, the spring

Visits the valley,—break away the clouds,—  
I bathe in the morn's soft and silvered air,  
And loiter willing by yon loitering stream  
Sparrows far off, and nearer, April's bird,  
Blue-coated,—flying before from tree to tree,  
Courageous sing a delicate overture  
To lead the tardy concert of the year  
Onward and nearer rides the sun of May,  
And wide around, the marriage of the plants  
Is sweetly solemnized. Then flows amain<sup>2</sup> 21  
The surge of summer's beauty; dell and crag,  
Hollow and lake, hillside, and pine arcade,  
Are touched with genius. Yonder ragged cliff

Has thousand faces in a thousand hours.

<sup>1</sup> the three fates of Greek mythology, who spun, weave, and cut the thread of human lives and destinies  
<sup>2</sup> with might

Beneath low hills, in the broad interval  
Through which at will our Indian rivolet  
Winds mindful still of sannup<sup>1</sup> and of squaw,  
Whose pipe and arrow oft the plough un-  
buries, 29

Here in pine houses built of new fallen trees,  
Supplanters of the tribe, the farmers dwell.  
Traveller, to thee, perchance, a tedious road,  
Or, it may be, a picture, to these men,  
The landscape is an armory of powers,  
Which, one by one, they know to draw and  
use

They harness beast, bird, insect, to their work;

They prove the virtues of each bed of rock,  
And, like the chemist mid his loaded jars,  
Draw from each stratum its adapted use  
To drag their crops or weapon their arts  
withal 40

They turn the frost upon their chemic heap,  
They set the wind to winnow pulse and grain,  
They thank the spring-flood for its fertile  
slime,

And, on cheap summit-levels of the snow,  
Slide with the sledge to inaccessible woods  
O'er meadows bottomless. So, year by year,  
They fight the elements with elements,  
(That one would say, meadow and forest  
walked,

Transmuted in these men to rule their like,)  
And by the order in the field disclose 50  
The order regnant in the yeoman's brain

What these strong masters wrote at large in miles

I followed in small copy in my acre,  
For there's no rood has not a star above it,  
The cordial quality of pear or plum  
Ascends as gladly in a single tree  
As in broad orchards resonant with bees;  
And every atom poises for itself,  
And for the whole. The gentle deities 59  
Showed me the lore of colors and of sounds,  
The innumerable tenements of beauty,  
The miracle of generative force,  
Far-reaching concords of astronomy  
Felt in the plants, and in the punctual birds;  
Better, the linked purpose of the whole,  
And, chiefest prize, found I true liberty  
In the glad home plain-dealing nature gave.

<sup>1</sup> warrior, Indian brave

The polite found me impolite; the great  
 Would mortify me, but in vain; for still  
 I am a willow of the wilderness, 70  
 Loving the wind that bent me. All my hurts  
 My garden spade can heal. A woodland walk,  
 A quest of river-grapes, a mocking thrush,  
 A wild-rose, or rock-loving columbine,  
 Salve my worst wounds  
 For thus the wood-gods murmured in my  
 ear  
 "Dost love our manners? Canst thou silent  
 lie?  
 Canst thou, thy pride forgot, like nature  
 pass  
 Into the winter night's extinguished mood?  
 Canst thou shine now, then darkle, 80  
 And being latent, feel thyself no less?  
 As, when the all-worshipped moon attracts  
 the eye,  
 The river, hill, stems, foliage are obscure  
 Yet envies none, none are unenviable."

1847

## ODE

INSCRIBED TO W. H. CHANNING

William Henry Channing, a Unitarian minister of Boston, was deeply interested in experiments in social reform, such as the Brook Farm experiment with which Hawthorne associated himself. He was a nephew of William Ellery Channing, the Unitarian leader. The ode reflects Emerson's attitude toward reformers and humanitarian movements and possibilities. A. T. Odell, *La Doctrine Sociale d'Emerson* (1931), William Slater in the *International Journal of Ethics* (July, 1903), and Van Wyck Brooks, *Harper's Magazine* (December, 1926), may be consulted concerning this phase of Emerson's teaching. The poet expresses in "New England Reformers" (*Works*, III), the fundamental thought of this ode, i.e., that outward usages and attacks on existing institutions avail society little when man, not himself renovated through self-discipline, seeks to improve things about him.

THOUGH loath to grieve  
 The evil time's sole patriot,  
 I cannot leave  
 My honied thought  
 For the priest's cant,  
 Or statesman's rant.

If I refuse  
 My study for their politesse,  
 Which at the best is trick,  
 The angry Muse 10  
 Puts confusion in my brain.

But who is he that prates  
 Of the culture of mankind,  
 Of better arts and life?  
 Go, blindworm, go,  
 Behold the famous States  
 Harrying Mexico!  
 With rifle and with knifel

Or who, with accent bolder,  
 Dare praise the freedom-loving mountaineer?  
 I found by thee, O rushing Contoocook!<sup>2</sup> 21  
 And in thy valleys, Agiochook!<sup>3</sup>  
 The jackals of the negro-holder.

The God who made New Hampshire  
 Taunted the lofty land  
 With little men;—  
 Small bat and wren  
 House in the oak—  
 If earth-fire cleave  
 The upheaved land, and bury the folk, 30  
 The southern crocodile would grieve  
 Virtue palter, Right is hence,  
 Freedom praised, but hid;  
 Funeral eloquence  
 Rattles the coffin-lid.

What boots thy zeal,  
 O glowing friend,  
 That would indignant rend  
 The northland from the south?  
 Wherefore? to what good end? 40  
 Boston Bay and Bunker Hill  
 Would serve things still,—  
 Things are of the snake.

The horseman serves the horse,  
 The neatherd serves the neat,<sup>4</sup>  
 The merchant serves the purse,  
 The eater serves his meat;

<sup>1</sup> In the Mexican War (1846-1848), which inspired the first series of Lowell's *Biglow Papers*. <sup>2</sup> A New Hampshire river flowing into the Merrimack. <sup>3</sup> Indian name for the White Mountains. <sup>4</sup> Old word for cattle.

'Tis the day of the chattel,  
Web to weave, and corn to grind;  
Things are in the saddle,  
And ride mankind.

50

There are two laws discrete,  
Not reconciled,—  
Law for man, and law for thing;  
The last builds town and fleet,  
But it runs wild,  
And doth the man unking.

'Tis fit the forest fall,  
The steep be graded,  
The mountain tunnelled,  
The sand shaded,  
The orchard planted,  
The glebe tilled,  
The prairie granted,  
The steamer built

60

Let man serve law for man;  
Live for friendship, live for love,  
For truth's and harmony's behoof,  
The state may follow how it can,  
As Olympus follows Jove.

70

Yet do not I implore  
The wrinkled shopman to my sounding  
woods,

Nor bid the unwilling senator  
Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes.  
Every one to his chosen work;—  
Foolish hands may mix and mar;  
Wise and sure the issues are.  
Round they roll till dark is light,  
Sex to sex, and even to odd,—

80

The over-god  
Who marries Right to Might,  
Who peoples, unpeoples,—  
He who exterminates  
Races by stronger races,  
Black by white faces,—  
Knows to bring honey  
Out of the lion;<sup>1</sup>  
Grafts gentlest scion  
On pirate and Turk.

The Cossack eats Poland,<sup>2</sup>  
Lake stolen fruit;

90

<sup>1</sup> Judges 14:9      <sup>2</sup> Though a part of the Russian Empire, Poland was constantly invaded by the Cossack cavalry of the Rumanian army

Her last noble is ruined,  
Her last poet mute:  
Straight, into double band  
The victors divide;  
Half for freedom strike and stand;—  
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her  
side.

1847

## DAYS

First printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1857. It has been deservedly popular. Emerson thought it perhaps his best poem. Its personifications are striking, and it has a well carried out parable, ample dramatic expression, and vivid final lines.

DAUGHTERS of Time, the hypocritic Days,  
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,  
And marching single in an endless file,  
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.  
To each they offer gifts after his will,  
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds  
them all

I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,  
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

1852

1857

## TWO RIVERS

G. E. Woodberry (*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 164) terms this poem "admirable for the harmonizing of the unseen river of the eye with the river of the senses, so that the stream of eternity seems but the immortalization of the stream of the meadows, and to flow as it were out of it."

THY summer voice, Musketaquid,<sup>1</sup>  
Repeats the music of the rain,  
But sweeter rivers pulsing fit  
Through thee, as thou through Concord  
Plain

Thou in thy narrow banks art pent:  
The stream I love unbounded goes  
Through flood and sea and firmament;  
Through light, through life, it forward flows.

<sup>1</sup> another form of Musketaquid, the Indian name of the Concord River

I see the inundation sweet,  
I hear the speeding of the stream 10  
Through years, through men, through Nature  
fleet,  
Through love and thought, through power  
and dream.

Musketaquit, a goblin strong,  
Of shard and flint makes jewels gay;  
They lose their grief who hear his song,  
And where he winds is the day of day.

So forth and brighter fares my stream,—  
Who drink it shall not thirst again,  
No darkness stains its equal gleam,  
And ages drop in it like rain. 20  
1856 1858

THE ROMANY<sup>1</sup> GIRL

By Emerson's time the device of reproducing the naïve comments of a more primitive person on the manners and customs of the civilized was somewhat outworn. Goldsmith used it in *The Citizen of the World*, or *Letters of a Chinese Philosopher* and Swift used it in *Gulliver's Travels*. Writers are conditioned by the age in which they live, but by the middle of the century the romantic conception of the superiority in integrity and simplicity of those closer to nature was losing acceptance.

THE sun goes down, and with him takes  
The coarseness of my poor attire,  
The fair moon mounts, and aye the flame  
Of gypsy beauty blazes higher.

Pale northern girls! you scorn our race,  
You captives of your arught halls,  
Wear out indoors your sickly days,  
But leave us the horizon walls.

And if I take you, dames, to task,  
And say it frankly without guile, 10  
Then you are gypsies in a mask,  
And I the lady all the while

If, on the heath, below the moon,  
I court and play with paler blood,  
Me false to mine dare whisper none,—  
One sallow horseman knows me good.

Go, keep your cheek's rose from the rain,  
For teeth and hair with shopmen deal;

My swarthy tint is in the grain,  
The rocks and forest know it real. 20

The wild air bloweth in our lungs,  
The keen stars twinkle in our eyes,  
The birds gave us our wily tongues,  
The panther in our dances flies.

You doubt we read the stars on high,  
Nathless we read your fortunes true;  
The stars may hide in the upper sky,  
But without glass we fathom you.

1855 1857

## BRAHMA

This poem emerged from Emerson's reading of the sacred books of the East. Compare the following passages from the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "These finite bodies have been said to belong to an eternal, indestructible, and infinite spirit. He who believes that this spirit can kill, and he who thinks it can be killed, both of these are wrong in judgment. It neither kills nor is killed. It is not born nor dies at any time. It has no origin nor will it ever have an origin. Unborn, changeless, eternal both as to future and past time, it is not slain when the body is killed" (chapter II). Or "I [Brahma] am the origin of all gods. I am the soul which exists in the heart of all beings, and I am the beginning and the middle and also the end of existing things. I am also eternal time. And I am Death who seizes all, and the Birth of those to be" (chapter IX).

If the red slayer thinks he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;  
Shadow and sunlight are the same;  
The vanished gods to me appear,  
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out,  
When me they fly, I am the wings; 10  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

1856 1857

<sup>1</sup> gypsy

TERMINUS<sup>1</sup>

E. W. Emerson commented on this poem (Centenary Edition, 489) "In the last days of 1866 as I met my father in New York . . . we spent the night together at the St. Denis Hotel, and as we sat by the fire he read me two or three of his poems among them 'Terminus' It almost startled me. No thought of his ageing had ever come to me, and there he sat, with no apparent abatement of bodily vigor, and young in spirit, recognizing with acquiescence his failing power, I think he smiled as he read. He recognized, as none of us did, that his working days were nearly done" Emerson was not yet sixty-five when this poetic renunciation of active life was written

It is time to be old,  
To take in sail.—  
The god of bounds,  
Who sets to seas a shore,  
Came to me in his fatal rounds,  
And said: "No more!  
No farther shoot  
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.  
Fancy departs: no more invent,  
Contract thy firmament 10  
To compass of a tent  
There's not enough for this and that,  
Make thy option which of two,  
Economize the failing river,

<sup>1</sup> the god of boundaries in Roman mythology

Not the less revere the Giver,  
Leave the many and hold the few.  
Timely wise accept the terms,  
Softly the fall with wary foot;  
A little while  
Still plan and smile, 20  
And, fault of novel germs,  
Mature the unfallen fruit  
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,  
Bad husbands of their fires,  
Who, when they gave thee breath,  
Failed to bequeath  
The needful sinew stark as once,  
The Baresark<sup>1</sup> marrow to thy bones,  
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,  
Inconstant heat and nerveless rems,— 30  
Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,  
Amid the gladiators, halt and numb "

As the bird trims her to the gale,  
I trim myself to the storm of time,  
I man the rudder, reef the sail,  
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime  
"Lowly faithful, banish fear,  
Right onward drive unharmed,  
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,  
And every wave is charmed " 40  
1866 1867

<sup>1</sup> Given to wild violence. The more common form of the word is *berserk*. In old Scandinavian lore the berserks were savage heathen warriors

## From NATURE

Emerson's little book *Nature* was published anonymously in 1836. It was reprinted, somewhat revised, in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures* (1849). Emerson also had an essay on the subject in *Essays, Second Series* (1844). Parts I and III are given here. Emerson's *Nature* is that of the first half of the century, when it was worshipped almost idolatrously as a medium between God and man, the three akin because of the spiritual element or divinity in nature and man

A subtle chain of countless rings  
The next unto the farthest brings,  
The eye reads omens where it goes,  
And speaks all languages the rose,  
And, striving to be man, the worm  
Mounts through all the spires of form

## I. NATURE

To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber as from society. I am not solitary whilst I read and write, though nobody is with me. But if a man would be alone, let him look at the stars. The rays that come from those heavenly worlds will separate between him and what he touches. One might think the atmosphere was made transparent with this design, to give man, in the  
10 heavenly bodies, the perpetual presence of the sublime. Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are! If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night

come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

The stars awaken a certain reverence, because though always present, they are inaccessible; but all natural objects make a kindred impression, when the mind is open to their influence. Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort her secret, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection. Nature never became a toy to a wise spirit. The flowers, the animals, the mountains, reflected the wisdom of his best hour, as much as they had delighted the simplicity of his childhood.

When we speak of nature in this manner, we have a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the woodcutter, from the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title.

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth, becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says—he is my creature, and mangle all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorizes a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourning piece. In

good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life, always is a child. In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life—no disgrace, no calamity (leaving me my eyes), which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me, I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental. To be brothers, to be acquaintances—master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.

The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister, is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. The waving of the boughs in the storm, is new to me and old. It takes me by surprise, and yet is not unknown. Its effect is like that of a higher thought or a better emotion coming over me, when I deemed I was thinking justly or doing right.

Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight, does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both. It is necessary to use these pleasures with great temperance. For, nature is not always tricked in holiday attire, but the same scene which yesterday breathed perfume and glittered as for the frolic of the nymphs, is overspread with

melancholy today. Nature always wears the colors of the spirit. To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then, there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population.

### III. BEAUTY

A nobler want of man is served by nature, namely, the love of Beauty.

The ancient Greeks called the world *κόσμος* [kosmos], beauty. Such is the constitution of all things, or such the plastic power of the human eye, that the primary forms, as the sky, the mountain, the tree, the animal, give us a delight *in and for themselves*, a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping. This seems partly owing to the eye itself. The eye is the best of artists. By the mutual action of its structure and of the laws of light, perspective is produced, which integrates every mass of objects, of what character soever, into a well colored and shaded globe, so that where the particular objects are mean and uninteresting, the landscape which they compose is round and symmetrical. And as the eye is the best composer, so light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make beautiful. And the stimulus it affords to the sense, and a sort of infinitude which it hath, like space and time, make all matter gay. Even the corpse has its own beauty. But besides this general grace diffused over nature, almost all the individual forms are agreeable to the eye, as is proved by our endless imitations of some of them, as the acorn, the grape, the pine-cone, the wheat-ear, the egg, the wings and forms of most birds, the lion's claw, the serpent, the butterfly, sea-shells, flames, clouds, buds, leaves, and the forms of many trees, as the palm.

For better consideration, we may distribute the aspects of Beauty in a threefold manner.

1. First, the simple perception of natural forms is a delight. The influence of the forms and actions in nature is so needful to man, that, in its lowest functions, it seems to lie on the confines of commodity and beauty. To the body and mind which have been cramped

by noxious work or company, nature is medicinal and restores their tone. The tradesman, the attorney comes out of the din and craft of the street and sees the sky and the woods, and is a man again. In their eternal calm, he finds himself. The health of the eye seems to demand a horizon. We are never tired, so long as we can see far enough.

But in other hours, Nature satisfies by its loveliness, and without any mixture of corporeal benefit. I see the spectacle of morning from the hilltop over against my house, from daybreak to sunrise, with emotions which an angel might share. The long slender bars of cloud float like fishes in the sea of crimson light. From the earth, as a shore, I look out into that silent sea. I seem to partake its rapid transformations; the active enchantment reaches my dust, and I dilate and conspire with the morning wind. How does Nature defy us with a few and cheap elements! Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos,<sup>1</sup> and unimagined realms of faerie, broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding, the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams.

Not less excellent, except for our less susceptibility in the afternoon, was the charm, last evening, of a January sunset. The western clouds divided and subdivided themselves into pink flakes modulated with tints of unspeakable softness, and the air had so much life and sweetness that it was a pain to come within doors. What was it that Nature would say? Was there no meaning in the live repose of the valley behind the mill, and which Homer or Shakespeare could not reform for me in words? The leafless trees become spires of flame in the sunset, with the blue east for their background, and the stars of the dead calices of flowers, and every withered stem and stubble rimmed with frost, contribute something to the mute music.

The inhabitants of cities suppose that the country landscape is pleasant only half the year. I please myself with the graces of the winter scenery, and believe that we are as much touched by it as by the genial influences

<sup>1</sup> ancient Paphos in the isle of Cyprus, chief seat of the worship of Venus

of summer. To the attentive eye, each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field, it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again. The heavens change every moment, and reflect their glory or gloom on the plains beneath. The state of the crop in the surrounding farms alters the expression of the earth from week to week. The succession of native plants in the pastures and roadsides, 10 which makes the silent clock by which time tells the summer hours, will make even the divisions of the day sensible to a keen observer. The tribes of birds and insects, like the plants punctual to their time, follow each other, and the year has room for all. By watercourses, the variety is greater. In July, the blue pontedera or pickerel-weed blooms in large beds in the shallow parts of our pleasant river, and swarms with yellow butterflies in continual motion. Art cannot rival this pomp of purple and gold. Indeed the river is a perpetual gala, and boasts each month a new ornament

But this beauty of Nature which is seen and felt as beauty, is the least part. The shows of day, the dewy morning, the rainbow, mountains, orchards in blossom, stars, moonlight, shadows in still water, and the like, if too eagerly hunted, become shows merely, and mock us with their unreality. Go out of the house to see the moon, and 'tis mere tinsel; it will not please as when its light shines upon your necessary journey. The beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoons of October, who ever could clutch it? Go forth to find it and it is gone; 'tis only a mirage as you look from the windows of diligence.

2. The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is essential to its perfection. The high and divine beauty which can be loved without effeminacy, is that which is found in combination with the human will. Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue. Every natural action is graceful. Every heroic act is also decent, and causes the place and the bystanders to shine. We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it. Every rational creature has all nature for his dowry and estate. It is his, if he will. He may divest himself of it; he may 50 creep into a corner, and abdicate his kingdom,

as most men do, but he is entitled to the world by his constitution. In proportion to the energy of his thought and will, he takes up the world into himself. "All those things for which men plough, build, or sail, obey virtue," said Sallust. "The winds and waves," said Gibbon, "are always on the side of the ablest navigators." So are the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven. When a noble act is done,—perchance in a scene of great natural beauty, when Leonidas and his three hundred martyrs consume one day in dying, and the sun and moon come each and look at them once in the steep defile of Thermopylæ, when Arnold Winkelried, in the high Alps, under the shadow of the avalanche, gathers in his side a sheaf of Austrian spears to break the line for his comrades, are not these heroes entitled to add the beauty of the scene to the beauty of the deed? When the bark of Columbus nears the shore of America;—before it, the beach lined with savages, fleeing out of all their huts of cane; the sea behind, and the purple mountains of the Indian Archipelago around, can we separate the man from the living picture? Does not the New World clothe his form with her palm-groves and savannahs<sup>1</sup> as fit drapery? Ever does natural beauty steal in like air, and envelop great actions. When Sir Harry Vane was dragged up the Tower-hill, sitting on a sled, to suffer death as the champion of the English laws, one of the multitude cried out to him, "You never sate on so glorious a seat!" Charles II, to intimidate the citizens of London, caused the patriot Lord Russell to be drawn in an open coach through the principal streets of the city on his way to the scaffold. "But," his biographer says, "the multitude imagined they saw liberty and virtue sitting by his side." In private places, among sordid objects, an act of truth or heroism seems at once to draw to itself the sky as its temple, the sun as its candle. Nature stretches out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and the violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child. Only let his thoughts be of equal scope, and the frame will suit the picture. A virtuous man is in unison with her

<sup>1</sup> treeless plains



works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere. Homer, Pindar, Socrates, Phocion, associate themselves fitly in our memory with the geography and climate of Greece. The visible heavens and earth sympathize with Jesus. And in common life whosoever has seen a person of powerful character and happy genius, will have remarked how easily he took all things along with him,—the persons, the opinions and the day, and nature became ancillary to a man.

3. There is still another aspect under which the beauty of the world may be viewed, namely, as it becomes an object of the intellect. Besides the relation of things to virtue, they have a relation to thought. The intellect searches out the absolute order of things as they stand in the mind of God, and without the colors of affection. The intellectual and the active powers seem to succeed each other, and the exclusive activity of the one generates the exclusive activity of the other. There is something unfriendly in each to the other, but they are like the alternate periods of feeding and working in animals; each prepares and will be followed by the other. Therefore does beauty, which, in relation to actions, as we have seen, comes unsought, and comes because it is unsought, remain for the apprehension and pursuit of the intellect; and then again, in its turn, of the active power. Nothing divine dies. All good is eternally reproductive. The beauty of nature re-forms itself in the mind, and not for barren contemplation, but for new creation.

All men are in some degree impressed by the face of the world; some men even to delight. This love of beauty is Taste. Others have the same love in such excess, that, not content with admiring, they seek to embody it in new forms. The creation of beauty is Art.

The production of a work of art throws a light upon the mystery of humanity. A work of art is an abstract or epitome of the world. It is the result or expression of nature, in miniature. For although the works of nature are innumerable and all different, the result or the expression of them all is similar and single. Nature is a sea of forms radically alike and even unique. A leaf, a sunbeam, a landscape, the ocean, make an analogous impression on

the mind. What is common to them all,—that perfectness and harmony, is beauty. The standard of beauty is the entire circuit of natural forms,—the totality of nature; which the Italians expressed by defining beauty "il più nelli' uno."<sup>1</sup> Nothing is quite beautiful alone; nothing but is beautiful in the whole. A single object is only so far beautiful as it suggests this universal grace. The poet, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the architect, seek each to concentrate this radiance of the world on one point, and each in his several work to satisfy the love of beauty which stimulates him to produce. Thus is Art a nature passed through the alembic of man. Thus in art does Nature work through the will of a man filled with the beauty of her first works.

The world thus exists to the soul to satisfy the desire of beauty. This element I call an ultimate end. No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty. Beauty, in its largest and profoundest sense, is one expression for the universe. God is the all-fair. Truth, and goodness, and beauty, are but different faces of the same All. But beauty in nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good. It must stand as a part, and not as yet the last or highest expression of the final cause of Nature.

1836

## THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE PHI  
BETA KAPPA SOCIETY, AT CAMBRIDGE,  
AUGUST 31, 1837

For the stimulating effect of this speech when given as a Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard, see Bliss Perry's *The Prose of Folly* (1923). It served as a declaration of principles on Emerson's part. He presents the scholar as Man Thinking, not merely man echoing other men's thoughts. The chief influences on him are Nature, which complements the soul, and Books, which typify the past, and of which each age must have its own. Action is better than books, and character higher than intellect, and labor is sacred. Emerson was the apostle of intellectual freedom, of self-trust, self-culture, and self-development. The peroration

<sup>1</sup> Translation follows.

advocating American literary freedom from Europe is the high point of the speech. Shorn of Emerson's delivery, and its ideas somewhat obsolete with the passing of time, the speech cannot impress readers as it once did, but it holds its place as a landmark in American literary history, it was prophetic of a new era.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

I greet you on the recommencement of our literary year. Our anniversary is one of hope, and, perhaps, not enough of labor. We do not meet for games of strength or skill, for the recitation of histories, tragedies, and odes, like the ancient Greeks; for parliaments of love and poesy, like the Troubadours;<sup>1</sup> nor for the advancement of science, like our contemporaries in the British and European capitals. Thus far, our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible insunct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else, when the sluggish intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp,<sup>2</sup> which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce, shall one day be the polestar for a thousand years?

In this hope I accept the topic which not only usage but the nature of our association seem to prescribe to this day,—the AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Year by year we come up hither to read one more chapter of his biography. Let us inquire what light new days and events have thrown on his character and his hopes.

It is one of those fables which out of an un-

<sup>1</sup> medieval lyric poets of Southern France and Northern Italy, during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, who often met in poetic contests  
<sup>2</sup> the small northern constellation Lyra, toward which the solar system was thought to be moving

known antiquity convey an unlooked-for wisdom, that the gods, in the beginning, divided Man into men, that he might be more helpful to himself, just as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer its end.

The old fable covers a doctrine ever new and sublime, that there is One Man,—present to all particular men only partially, or through one faculty; and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man. Man is not a farmer, or a professor, or an engineer, but he is all. Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier. In the divided or social state these functions are parcelled out to individuals, each of whom aims to do his stint of the joint work, whilst each other performs his. The fable implies that the individual, to possess himself, must sometimes return from his own labor to embrace all the other laborers. But, unfortunately, this original unit, this fountain of power, has been so distributed to multitudes, has been so minutely subdivided and peddled out, that it is spilled into drops, and cannot be gathered. The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute-book; the mechanic a machine, the sailor a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

In this view of him, as *Man Thinking*, the theory of his office is contained. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future

invites. Is not indeed every man a student, and do not all things exist for the student's behoof? And, finally, is not the true scholar the only true master? But the old oracle said, "All things have two handles: beware of the wrong one." In life, too often, the scholar errs with mankind and forfeits his privilege. Let us see him in his school, and consider him in reference to the main influences he receives.

I. The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of Nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find,—so entire, so boundless. Far too as her splendors shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without center, without circumference,—in the mass and in the particle, Nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind every thing is individual, stands by itself. By and by, it finds how to join two things and see in them one nature, then three, then three thousand, and so, tyrannized over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground whereby contrary and remote things cohere and flower out from one stem. It presently learns that since the dawn of history there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambi-

nous soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on forever to animate the last fiber of organization, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

Thus to him, to this schoolboy under the bending dome of day, is suggested that he and it proceed from one root, one is leaf and one is flower, relation, sympathy, stirring in every vein. And what is that root? Is not that the soul of his soul? A thought too bold, a dream too wild. Yet when this spiritual light shall have revealed the law of more earthly natures,—when he has learned to worship the soul, and to see that the natural philosophy that now is, is only the first gropings of its gigantic hand, he shall look forward to an ever expanding knowledge as to a becoming creator. He shall see that Nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of Nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself;" and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

II The next great influence into the spirit of the scholar is the mind of the Past,—in whatever form, whether of literature, of art, of institutions, that mind is inscribed. Books are the best type of the influence of the past, and perhaps we shall get at the truth,—learn the amount of this influence more conveniently,—by considering their value alone.

The theory of books is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him shortlived actions, it went out from him immortal thoughts. It came to him business; it went from him poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Or, I might say, it depends on how far the process had gone, of transmuting life into truth. In proportion to the completeness of the distillation, so will the purity and imperishableness of the product be. But none is quite perfect. As no air-pump can by any means make a perfect vacuum, so neither can any artist entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought, that shall be as efficient, 10 in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. The poet chanting was felt to be a 20 divine man henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit henceforward it is settled the book is perfect, as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is 30 disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.

Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. Hence the book-learned class, who value books, as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate<sup>1</sup> with the world and the soul. Hence the restorers of readings, the emendators, the bibliomaniacs of all de- 35 grees

<sup>1</sup> the common people, a phrase revived during the French Revolution from the class divisions of medieval France

Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius, not the privilege of here and there a favorite, but the sound estate of every man. In its essence it is progressive. The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me 20 down. They look backward and not forward. But genius looks forward: the eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead, man hopes: genius creates. Whatever talents may be, if the man create not, the pure efflux of the Deity is not his,—cinders and smoke there may be, but not yet flame. There are creative manners, there are creative actions, and creative words, manners, actions, words, that is, indicative of no custom or authority, but 30 springing spontaneous from the mind's own sense of good and fair.

On the other part, instead of being its own seer, let it receive from another mind its truth, though it were in torrents of light, without periods of solitude, inquest, and self-recovery, and a fatal disservice is done. Genius is always sufficiently the enemy of genius by over-influence. The literature of every nation bears me witness. The English dramatic poets have 40 Shakspearized now for two hundred years

Undoubtedly there is a right way of reading, so it be sternly subordinated Man Thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must,—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining,—we 35 repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again,

where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."

It is remarkable, the character of the pleasure we derive from the best books. They impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads. We read the verses of one of the great English poets, of Chaucer, of Marvell, of Dryden, with the most modern joy,—with a pleasure, I mean, which is in great part caused by the abstraction of all *time* from their verses. There is some awe mixed with the joy of our surprise, when this poet, who lived in some past world, two or three hundred years ago, says that which lies close to my own soul, that which I also had well-nigh thought and said. But for the evidence thence afforded to the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds, we should suppose some preëstablished harmony, some foresight of souls that were to be, and some preparation of stores for their future wants, like the fact observed in insects, who lay up food before death for the young grub they shall never see.

I would not be hurried by any love of system, by any exaggeration of instincts, to underrate the Book. We all know, that as the human body can be nourished on any food, though it were boiled grass and the broth of shoes, so the human mind can be fed by any knowledge. And great and heroic men have existed who had almost no other information than by the printed page. I only would say that it needs a strong head to bear that diet. One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out the wealth of the Indies." There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world. We then see, what is always true, that as the seer's hour of vision is short and rare among heavy days and months, so is its record, perchance, the least part of his volume. The discerning will read, in his Plato or Shakspeare, only that least part,—only the authentic utterances of the oracle;—all the rest

he rejects, were it never so many times Plato's and Shakspeare's.

Of course there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us when they aim not to drill, but to create, when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

III. There goes in the world a notion that the scholar should be a recluse, a valetudinarian,—as unfit for any handiwork or public labor as a penknife for an ax. The so-called "practical men" sneer at speculative men, as if, because they speculate or *see*, they could do nothing. I have heard it said that the clergy,—who are always, more universally than any other class, the scholars of their day,—are addressed as women, that the rough, spontaneous conversation of men they do not hear, but only a muncing and diluted speech. They are often virtually disfranchised, and indeed there are advocates for their celibacy. As far as this is true of the studious classes, it is not just and wise. Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth. Whilst the world hangs before the eye as a cloud of beauty, we cannot even see its beauty. Inaction is cowardice, but there can be no scholar without the heroic mind. The preamble of thought, the transition through which it passes from the unconscious to the conscious, is action. Only so much do I know, as I have lived. Instantly we know whose words are loaded with life, and whose not.

The world,—this shadow of the soul, or *other me*, lies wide around. Its attractions are the keys which unlock my thoughts and make me acquainted with myself. I run eagerly into

this resounding tumult. I grasp the hands of those next me, and take my place in the ring to suffer and to work, taught by an instinct that so shall the dumb abyss be vocal with speech. I pierce its order; I dissipate its fear; I dispose of it within the circuit of my expanding life. So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted, or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instructors in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power.

It is the raw material out of which the intellect molds her splendid products. A strange process, too, this by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf<sup>1</sup> is converted into satin. The manufacture goes forward at all hours

The actions and events of our childhood and youth are now matters of calmest observation. They lie like fair pictures in the air. Not so with our recent actions,—with the business which we now have in hand. On this we are quite unable to speculate. Our affections as yet circulate through it. We no more feel or know it than we feel the feet, or the hand, or the brain of our body. The new deed is yet a part of life,—remains for a time immersed in our unconscious life. In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured, the corruptible has put on incorruption.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth it is an object of beauty, however base its origin and neighborhood. Observe too the impossibility of antedating this act. In its grub state, it cannot fly, it cannot shine, it is a dull grub. But suddenly, without observation, the selfsame thing unfurls beautiful wings, and is an angel of wisdom. So is there no fact, no event, in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean. Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and

dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, profession and party, town and country, nation and world, must also soar and sing.

Of course, he who has put forth his total strength in fit actions has the richest return of wisdom. I will not shut myself out of this globe of action, and transplant an oak into a flowerpot, there to hunger and pine; nor trust the revenue of some single faculty, and exhaust one vein of thought, much like those Savoyards,<sup>3</sup> who, getting their livelihood by carving shepherds, shepherdesses, and smoking Dutchmen, for all Europe, went out one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine-trees. Authors we have, in numbers, who have written out their vein, and who, moved by a commendable prudence, sail for Greece or Palestine, follow the trapper into the prairie, or ramble round Algiers, to replenish their merchantable stock.

If it were only for a vocabulary, the scholar would be covetous of action. Life is our dictionary. Years are well spent in country labors, in town, in the insight into trades and manufactures, in frank intercourse with many men and women; in science; in art; to the one end of mastering in all their facts a language by which to illustrate and embody our perceptions. I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or the splendor of his speech. Life lies behind us as the quarry from whence we get tiles and copestones for the masonry of to-day. This is the way to learn grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.

But the final value of action, like that of books, and better than books, is that it is a resource. That great principle of Undulation in nature, that shows itself in the inspiring and expiring of the breath; in desire and satiety, in the ebb and flow of the sea, in day and night; in heat and cold; and, as yet more deeply ingrained in every atom and every fluid, is known to us under the name of Polarity,—these "fits of easy transmission and reflection,"

<sup>1</sup> the food of silkworms

<sup>2</sup> Corinthians 15:53

<sup>3</sup> inhabitants of Savoy in northwestern Italy

as Newton called them,—are the law of nature because they are the law of spirit.

The mind now thinks, now acts, and each fit reproduces the other. When the artist has exhausted his materials, when the fancy no longer paints, when thoughts are no longer apprehended and books are a weariness,—he has always the resource *to live*. Character is higher than intellect. Thinking is the function. Living is the functionary. The stream retreats 10 to its source. A great soul will be strong to live, as well as strong to think. Does he lack organ or medium to impart his truth? He can still fall back on this elemental force of living them. This is a total act. Thinking is a partial act. Let the grandeur of justice shine in his affairs. Let the beauty of affection cheer his lowly roof. Those "far from fame," who dwell and act with him, will feel the force of his constitution in the doings and passages of the day better than it can be measured by any public and designed display. Time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives. Herein he unfolds the sacred germ of his instinct, screened from influence. What is lost in seemliness is gained in strength. Not out of those on whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhandseled<sup>1</sup> savage nature; 30 out of terrible Druids<sup>2</sup> and Berserkers come at last Alfred and Shakspeare.

I hear therefore with joy whatever is beginning to be said of the dignity and necessity of labor to every citizen. There is virtue yet in the hoe and the spade, for learned as well as for unlearned hands. And labor is everywhere welcome; always we are invited to work; only be this limitation observed, that a man shall not for the sake of wider activity sacrifice 40 any opinion to the popular judgments and modes of action.

I have now spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, and by action. It remains to say somewhat of his duties.

They are such as become Man Thinking.

<sup>1</sup> A handseel is a token given for good luck at the beginning of an enterprise, the negative adjective form used here means untried. <sup>2</sup> ancient Celtic priests, who conducted mysterious rites of sacrifice

They may all be comprised in self-trust. The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. Flamsteed and Herschel, in their glazed observatories, may catalogue the stars with the praise of all men, and the results being splendid and useful, honor is sure. But he, in his private observa- 10 tory, cataloguing obscure and nebulous stars of the human mind, which as yet no man has thought of as such,—watching days and months sometimes for a few facts, correcting still his old records,—must relinquish display and immediate fame. In the long period of his preparation he must betray often an ignorance and shiftness in popular arts, incurring the disdain of the able who shoulder him aside. Long he must stammer in his speech, 20 often forego the living for the dead. Worse yet, he must accept,—how often!—poverty and solitude. For the ease and pleasure of treading the old road, accepting the fashions, the education, the religion of society, he takes the cross of making his own, and, of course, the self-accusation, the faint heart, the frequent uncertainty and loss of time, which are the nettles and tangling vines in the way of the self-relying and self-directed, and the state of virtual hostility in which he seems to stand to society, and especially to educated society. For all this loss and scorn, what offset? He is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by 40 preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatsoever oracles the human heart, in all emergencies, in all solemn hours, has uttered as its commentary on the world of actions,—these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing men and events of today,—thus he shall hear and promulgate.

50 These being his functions, it becomes him to feel all confidence in himself, and to defer

never to the popular cry. He and he only knows the world. The world of any moment is the merest appearance. Some great decorum, some fetish of a government, some ephemeral trade, or war, or man, is cried up by half mankind and cried down by the other half, as if all depended on this particular up or down. The odds are that the whole question is not worth the poorest thought which the scholar has lost in listening to the controversy. Let him not quit his belief that a popgun is a popgun, though the ancient and honorable of the earth affirm it to be the crack of doom. In silence, in steadiness, in severe abstraction, let him hold by himself; add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his own time,—happy enough if he can satisfy himself alone that this day he has seen something truly *Success treads on every right step.* For the instinct is sure that prompts him to tell his brother what he thinks. He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds. He learns that he who has mastered any law in his private thoughts, is master to that extent of all men whose language he speaks, and of all into whose language his own can be translated. The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers,—that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature, the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it, the better part of every man feels, *This is my music, this is myself.*

In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be,—free and brave. Free even to the definition of freedom, “without any hindrance that does not arise out of his own constitution.” Brave, for fear is a thing which a scholar by his very function puts behind him. Fear always springs from ignorance. It is a shame to him if his tranquillity, amid dangerous times, arise from the

presumption that like children and women his is a protected class; or if he seek a temporary peace by the diversion of his thoughts from politics or vexed questions, hiding his head like an ostrich in the flowering bushes, peeping into microscopes, and turning rhymes, as a boy whistles to keep his courage up. So is the danger a danger still, so is the fear worse. Manlike let him turn and face it. Let him look into its eye and search its nature, inspect its origin,—see the whelping of this lion,—which lies no great way back, he will then find in himself a perfect comprehension of its nature and extent; he will have made his hands meet on the other side, and can henceforth defy it and pass on superior. The world is his who can see through its pretension. What deafness, what stone-blind custom, what overgrown error you behold is there only by sufferance,—by your sufferance. See it to be a lie, and you have already dealt it its mortal blow.

Yes, we are the cowed,—we the trustless. It is a mischievous nonon that we are come late into nature; that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin, it is flint. They adapt themselves to it as they may, but in proportion as a man has anything in him divine, the firmament flows before him and takes his signet and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature and all art, and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, now at last ripe, and inviting nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing. Wherever Macdonald sits,<sup>1</sup> there is the head of the table. Linnaeus makes botany the most alluring of studies, and wins it from the farmer and the herb-woman, Davy, chemistry; and Cuvier, fossils. The day is always his who works in it with serenity and great aims. The unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth,

<sup>1</sup> A proverbial saying of uncertain origin and appearing in various forms, emphasizing the fact that a man of strength and genius always makes his power felt.



as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon.

For this self-trust, the reason is deeper than can be fathomed,—darker than can be enlightened. I might not carry with me the feeling of my audience in stating my own belief. But I have already shown the ground of my hope, in adverting to the doctrine that man is one. I believe man has been wronged; he has wronged himself. He has almost lost the light that can lead him back to his prerogatives. Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of today, are bugs, are spawn, and are called "the mass" and "the herd." In a century, in a millennium, one or two men; that is to say, one or two approximations to the right state of every man. All the rest behold in the hero or the poet their own green and crude being,—ripened, yes, and are content to be less, so *that* may attain to its full stature. What a testimony, full of grandeur, full of pity, is borne to the demands of his own nature, by the poor clansman, the poor partisan, who rejoices in the glory of his chief. The poor and the low find some amends to their immense moral capacity, for their acquiescence in a political and social inferiority. They are content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person, so that justice shall be done by him to that common nature which it is the dearest desire of all to see enlarged and glorified. They sun themselves in the great man's light, and feel it to be their own element. They cast the dignity of man from their downtrodden selves upon the shoulders of a hero, and will perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him.

Men such as they are, very naturally seek money or power, and power because it is as good as money,—the "spoils," so called, "of office." And why not? for they aspire to the highest, and thus, in their sleepwalking, they dream is highest. Wake them and they shall quit the false good and leap to the true, and leave governments to clerks and desks. This revolution is to be wrought by the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture. The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the upbuilding of a man. Here are

the materials strewn along the ground. The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history. For a man, rightly viewed, comprehendeth the particular natures of all men. Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself. The books which once we valued more than the apple of the eye, we have quite exhausted. What is that but saying that we have come up with the point of view which the universal mind took through the eyes of one scribe, we have been that man, and have passed on. First, one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.

But I have dwelt perhaps tediously upon this abstraction of the Scholar. I ought not to delay longer to add what I have to say of nearer reference to the time and to this country.

Historically, there is thought to be a difference in the ideas which predominate over successive epochs, and there are data for marking the genius of the Classic, of the Romantic, and now of the Reflective or Philosophical age. With the views I have intimated of the oneness or the identity of the mind through all individuals, I do not much dwell on these differences. In fact, I believe each individual passes through all three. The boy is a Greek, the youth, romantic, the adult, reflective. I deny not however that a revolution in the leading idea may be distinctly enough traced.

Our age is bewailed as the age of Introversion. Must that needs be evil? We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second

thoughts; we cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet, the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—

"Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

It is so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry? I look upon the discontent of the literary class as a mere announcement of the fact that they find themselves not in the state of mind of their fathers, and regret the coming state as untried; as a boy dreads the water before he has learned that he can swim. If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution, when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared, when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope, when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

I read with some joy of the auspicious signs of the coming days, as they glimmer already through poetry and art, through philosophy and science, through church and state.

One of these signs is the fact that the same movement which effected the elevation of what was called the lowest class in the state, assumed in literature a very marked and as benign an aspect. Instead of the sublime and beautiful, the near, the low, the common, was explored and poetized. That which had been negligently trodden under foot by those who were harnessing and provisioning themselves for long journeys into far countries, is suddenly found to be richer than all foreign parts. The literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are the topics of the time. It is a great stride. It is a sign,—is it not?—of new vigor when the extremities are made active, when currents of warm life run into the hands and the feet. I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; what is doing in Italy or Arabia; what is Greek art, or Provençal minstrelsy; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the

low. Give me insight into today, and you may have the antique and future worlds. What would we really know the meaning of? The meal in the firkin, the milk in the pail; the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and the gait of the body,—show me the ultimate reason of these matters, show me the sublime presence of the highest spiritual cause lurking, as always it does lurk, in these suburbs and extremities of Nature; let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly on an eternal law; and the shop, the plow, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing,—and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order, there is no trifle, there is no puzzle, but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench.

This idea has inspired the genius of Goldsmith, Burns, Cowper, and, in a newer time, of Goethe, Wordsworth, and Carlyle. This idea they have differently followed and with various success. In contrast with their writing, the style of Pope, of Johnson, of Gibbon, looks cold and pedantic. This writing is blood-warm. Man is surprised to find that things near are not less beautiful and wondrous than things remote. The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Goethe, in this very thing the most modern of the moderns, has shown us, as none ever did, the genius of the ancients.

There is one man of genius who has done much for this philosophy of life, whose literary value has never yet been rightly estimated,—I mean Emanuel Swedenborg. The most unimaginative of men, yet writing with the precision of a mathematician, he endeavored to engraft a purely philosophical Ethics on the popular Christianity of his time. Such an attempt of course must have difficulty which no genius could surmount. But he saw and showed the connection between nature and the affections of the soul. He pierced the emblematic or spiritual character of the visible, audible, tangible world. Especially did his shade-loving muse hover over and interpret

the lower parts of nature; he showed the mysterious bond that allies moral evil to the foul material forms, and has given in epical parables a theory of insanity, of beasts, of unclean and fearful things.

Another sign of our times, also marked by an analogous political movement, is the new importance given to the single person. Everything that tends to insulate the individual,—to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state,—tends to true union as well as greatness. "I learned," said the melancholy Pestalozzi, "that no man in God's wide earth is either willing or able to help any other man." Help must come from the bosom alone. The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be an university of knowledges. If there be one lesson more than another which should pierce his ear, it is, The world is nothing, the man is all; in yourself is the law of all nature, and you know not yet how a globule of sap ascends, in yourself slumbers the whole of Reason; it is for you to know all, it is for you to dare all. Mr. President and Gentlemen, this confidence in the unsearched might of man belongs, by all motives, by all prophecy, by all preparation, to the American Scholar. We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. Public and private avarice make the air we breathe thick and fat. The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant. See already the tragic consequence. The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant. Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these, but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust, some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hope-

ful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him. Patience,—patience, with the shades of all the good and great for company; and for solace the perspective of your own infinite life; and for work the study and the communication of principles, the making of those instincts prevalent, the conversion of the world. Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit,—not to be reckoned one character,—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong, and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet, we will work with our own hands, we will speak our own minds. The study of letters shall be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defense and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

1837

#### TO THE REVEREND HENRY WARE, JR

Henry Ware occupied the pulpit of the Second (Unitarian) Church in Boston. When he was appointed a professor in the Harvard Divinity School, Emerson, who had previously substituted for him, was made his successor. The letter is of interest as a confession on Emerson's part of his oracular inspiration and mode of writing. "I could not possibly give you 'arguments' I do not know what arguments mean in reference to any expression of a thought I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask how or why I am the most helpless of mortal men."

Concord, October 8, 1838

MY DEAR SIR,—I ought sooner to have acknowledged your kind letter of last week, and the Sermon it accompanied. The letter was right manly and noble. The Sermon, too, I

have read with attention. If it assails any doctrines of mine, perhaps I am not so quick to see it as writers generally—certainly I did not feel any disposition to depart from my habitual contentment that you should say your thought, whilst I say mine.

I believe I must tell you what I think of my new position. It strikes me very oddly that good and wise men at Cambridge and Boston should think of raising me into an object of criticism. I have always been, from my very incapacity of methodical writing, "a chartered libertine," free to worship and free to rail, lucky when I could make myself understood, but never esteemed near enough to the institutions and mind of society to deserve the notice of the masters of literature and religion. I have appreciated fully the advantage of my position, for I well know that there is no scholar less willing or less able to be a polemic. I could not give account of myself, if challenged I could not possibly give you one of the "arguments" you cruelly hunt at, on which any doctrine of mine stands. For I do not know what arguments mean in reference to any expression of a thought. I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men. I do not even see that either of these questions admits of an answer. So that, in the present droll posture of my affairs, when I see myself suddenly raised into the importance of a heretic, I am very uneasy when I advert to the supposed duties of such a personage, who is expected to make good his thesis against all comers.

I certainly shall do no such thing. I shall read what you and other good men write, as I have always done,—glad when you speak my thought, and skipping the page that has nothing for me. I shall go on, just as before, seeing whatever I can, and telling what I see, and, I suppose, with the same fortune that has hitherto attended me,—the joy of finding that my abler and better brothers, who work with the sympathy of society, loving and beloved, do now and then unexpectedly confirm my perceptions, and find my nonsense is only their own thought in motley. And so I am

Your affectionate servant,

R. W. EMERSON

## SELF-RELIANCE

This essay reflects Emerson's cardinal idea, the self-sufficiency of the individual. It presents also his attitude toward books and tradition, toward conformity and consistency, toward spontaneity, instinct, and intuition, toward travel and prayer. There was no collectivism in Emerson. The influence of society seemed hampering to him. The note of unsociability in this essay is recurrent in his writing.

"Ne te quascunque extra" 1

"Man is his own star and the soul that can  
Render an honest and a perfect man,  
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;  
Nothing to him falls early or too late  
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,  
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's  
*Honest Man's Fortunes*

Cast the bantering on the rocks,  
Suckle him with the she-wolf's teat,  
Wintered with the hawk and fox,  
Power and speed be hands and feet

I READ the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instil is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts, they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no

1 "Do not seek beyond thyself"

more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education 10 when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he 20 has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without preëstablished harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely intrusted as proportionate and of good issues, so it be 30 faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him, no muse befriends, no invention, no hope.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence 40 has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a 50 protected corner, not cowards fleeing before

a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, 10 these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it; so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand 20 by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit<sup>1</sup> is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests, he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court 30 him, he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *déclar*<sup>2</sup> he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no *Lethe*<sup>3</sup> for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can

<sup>1</sup> formerly where the cheapest seats in a theater were, just back of the orchestra, and from which might be heard the most outspoken judgments on play and players <sup>2</sup> brilliance <sup>3</sup> the river of forgetfulness in Hades

thus avoid all pledges and, having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence,—must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms<sup>1</sup> must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, "What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?" my friend suggested,—“But these impulses may be from below, not from above.” I replied, “They do not seem to me to be such, but if I am the Devil’s child, I will live then from the Devil.” No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this, the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition as if everything were titular<sup>2</sup> and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways.

<sup>1</sup> symbols of success

<sup>2</sup> existing in name or title only

If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes,<sup>1</sup> why should I not say to him, “Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper, be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.” Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached, as the counteraction of the doctrine of love, when that pulses and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim*. I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then again, do not tell me, as a good man did today, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they my poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold, for them I will go to prison if need be, but your miscellaneous popular charities, the education at college of fools, the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand, alms to sots, and the thousand-fold Relief Societies,—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man and his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are

<sup>1</sup> a British West Indian island from which slavery was officially abolished in 1834

penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion, it is easy in solitude to live after our own, but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your name and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from all your proper life. But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blindman's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he

is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four, so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime Nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history, I mean the "foolish face of praise,"<sup>1</sup> the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease, in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved but moved by a low usurping wilfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face, with the most disagreeable sensation.

For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to enstimate a sour face. The bystanders look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversion had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance, but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society

<sup>1</sup> from Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, line 212

is made to growl and howl, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it god-like as a trifle of no concernment.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loth to disappoint them.

But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself, what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.<sup>1</sup>

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today—"Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood"—Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himalah are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gage and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza;<sup>2</sup>—read it for-

ward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough today to do right and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed a united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's voice, and dignity into Washington's port, and America into Adams's eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemera. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it today because it is not of today. We love it and pay it homage because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and there-

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 39:13    <sup>2</sup> Emerson means a palindrome, which is the same, read forward or backward, as "toot" or "Madam, I'm Adam."



fore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted<sup>1</sup> and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife.<sup>2</sup> Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him, I wish that he would wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works, that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the center of things. Where he is there is Nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, everybody in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else, it takes place<sup>3</sup> of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age, requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design; —and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Caesar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Antony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio, Milton called "the height of Rome";<sup>4</sup> and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a

charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, Sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict; it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead-drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed, and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane,<sup>1</sup> owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason and finds himself a true prince.

Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both, the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg and Gustavus? Suppose they were virtuous, did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act today as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the luster will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits

<sup>1</sup> published to the world as the names of bankrupts were formerly    <sup>2</sup> the only musical instrument allowed to the Spartans    <sup>3</sup> precedence    <sup>4</sup> *Paradise Lost*, IX, 510

<sup>1</sup> a story as old as the *Arabian Nights*, but best known as found in the introductory scene of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*

not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax,<sup>1</sup> without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are intuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed.

<sup>1</sup> the difference between the directions of a heavenly body as seen from two different standpoints

My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverse, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things, should fill the world with his voice, should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the center of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their center by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If therefore a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old molded nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fullness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day, where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be anything more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.

Man is timid and apologetic, he is no longer upright, he dares not say "I think," "I am," but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no

reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God today. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies Nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers, he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with Nature in the present, above time.

This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phrasology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke, afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go, for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this: When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not

to man. All persons that ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea, long intervals of time, years, centuries, are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life and what is called death.

Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose, it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates; that the soul *becomes*, for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present there will be power not confident but agent.<sup>1</sup> To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height, and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all climes, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all in the ever-blessed ONE Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I

<sup>1</sup> active

see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is, in nature, the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul

Thus all concentrates. let us not rove, let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches

But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is his genius admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I all men's. Not for that will I adopt their pertulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, climate, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—“Come out unto us.” But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. “What we love that we have, but by desire we beleave ourselves of the love.”

If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war

and wake Thor and Woden, courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, “O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto.

Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximites. I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever my joy rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you, if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh today? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.”—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth, then will they justify me and do the same thing.

The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism<sup>1</sup>, and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of consciousness abides.

<sup>1</sup> the belief that faith alone is enough to insure salvation, thus making it unnecessary to obey the moral law

There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct* or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat and dog—whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding, whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy

lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *rears* it, *farms* it, *paddles*, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not "studying a profession," for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear, that a man is the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations, that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatres and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him,—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits, their modes of living, their association, in their property, in their speculative views.

1. In what prayers do men allow themselves! That which they call a holy office is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity, anything less than all good, is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends.

Caratach, in Fletcher's *Bonduca*, when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Andate, replies,—

"His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;  
Our valors are our best gods."<sup>1</sup>

Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance. it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide, him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster, "the blessed Immortals are swift."

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey." Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier, it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system! In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the elemental thought of duty and

man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating everything to the new terminology as a girl who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to any eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see, —how you can see; "It must be somehow that you stole the light from us." They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them churp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold<sup>2</sup> will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Traveling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination, did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In many hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveler; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes, the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be

<sup>1</sup> Act III, scene 1, lines 80-81. The original reads "dwells" instead of "lives."

<sup>2</sup> an enclosure (pound) for stray animals

amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

Traveling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

3. But the rage of traveling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate, and what is imitation but the traveling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments, our opinions, our tastes, our faculties lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic model?<sup>1</sup> Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation, but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker

can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakespeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakespeare will never be made by the study of Shakespeare. Do that which is assigned you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias, or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself, but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice, for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Fore-world again.

4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes, it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific, but this change is not amelioration. For everything that is given something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveler tell us truly, strike the savage with a broadaxe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle.

<sup>1</sup> styles of classic and medieval architecture

He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little, and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His notebooks impair his memory, his libraries overload his wit, the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic, but in Christendom where is the Christian?

There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin, whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of

all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Casas, "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill and bake his bread himself."

Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation today, next year die, and their experience dies with them.

And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he sees that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime, then he feels that it is not having, it does not belong to him, has no root in him and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire, and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali, "is seeking after thee, therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude.



Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is only as a man puts off all foreign support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and, in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that 10 power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and, so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles, just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shall sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles. 20

1841

### From THE OVER-SOUL

This essay appeared in the first series of Emerson's *Essays*, the volume that contained "The American Scholar" and "Self-Reliance." His mystical doctrine of the Over-Soul was a vital part of Emerson's message. It has been praised by many, and by others, among them O. W. Holmes, scoffed at and termed over-difficult to understand. A suggestive list of the elements that entered into it is given in the Concord Edition, II, 426-48. 40

"But souls that of his own good life partake  
He loves as his own self, dear as his eye  
They are to Him He'll never them forsake  
When they shall die, then God himself shall die  
They live, they live in blest eternity" 50

HENRY MORE

Space is ample, east and west,  
But two cannot go abreast,  
Cannot travel in it two  
Yonder masterful cuckoo  
Crowds every egg out of the nest,  
Quick or dead, except its own,  
A spell is laid on sod and stone,  
Night and Day 've been tampered with,  
Every quality and pith  
Surcharged and sultry with a power  
That works its will on age and hour

THERE is a difference between one and another hour of life in their authority and subsequent effect. Our faith comes in moments, our vice is habitual. Yet is there a depth in those brief moments, which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences. For this reason, the argument, which is always forthcoming to silence those who conceive extraordinary hopes of man, namely, the appeal to experience, is forever invalid and vain. A mightier hope abolishes despair. We give up the past to the objector, and yet we hope. He must explain this hope. We grant that human life is mean; but how did we find out that it was mean? What is the ground of this uneasiness of ours, of this old discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance, but the fine innuendo by which the great soul makes its enormous claim? Why do men feel that the natural history of man has never been written, but always he is leaving behind what you have said of him, and it becomes old, and books of metaphysics worthless? The philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained in the last analysis a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Always our being is descending into us from we know not whence. The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not balk the very next moment. I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

As with events, so is it with thoughts. When I watch that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me,—I see that I am a pensioner,—not a cause, but a surprised spectator of this ethereal

water; that I desire and look up, and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come.

The Supreme Critic on all the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest, as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere, that Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart, of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission, that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains every one to pass for what he is, and to speak from his character and not from his tongue; and which evermore tends and aims to pass into our thought and hand, and become wisdom, and virtue, and power, and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime, within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related, the eternal ONE. And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree, but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul. It is only by the vision of that Wisdom, that the horoscope of the ages can be read, and it is only by falling back on our better thoughts, by yielding to the spirit of prophecy which is innate in every man, that we can know what it saith. Every man's words, who speaks from that life, must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part. I dare not speak for it. My words do not carry its august sense, they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and, behold, their speech shall be lyrical, and sweet, and universal as the rising of the wind. Yet I desire, even by profane words, if sacred I may not use, to indicate the heaven of this deity, and to report what hints I have collected of the transcendent simplicity and energy of the Highest Law.

If we consider what happens in conversa-

tion, in reveries, in remorse, in times of passion, in surprises, in the instructions of dreams, wherein often we see ourselves in masquerade, —the droll disguises only magnifying and enhancing a real element, and forcing it on our distinct notice,—we shall catch many hints that will broaden and lighten into knowledge of the secret of nature. All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison,—but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the vast background of our being, in which they lie,—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. A man is the façade of a temple, wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call man,—the eating, drinking, planting, counting man,—does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect; but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue, when it flows through his affection, it is love. And the blindness of the intellect begins, when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins, when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims, in some one particular, to let the great soul have its way through us, in other words, to engage us to obey.

Of this pure nature every man is at some time sensible. Language cannot paint it with his colors. It is too subtle. It is undefinable, unmeasurable; but we know that it pervades and contains us. We know that all spiritual being is in man. A wise old proverb says, "God comes to see us without bell": that is, there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to all the attributes of God.

Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. These natures no man ever got above, but always they tower over us, and most in the moment when our interests tempt us to wound them.

The sovereignty of this nature whereof we speak is made known by its independency of those limitations which circumscribe us on every hand. The soul circumscribeth all things. As I have said, it contradicts all experience. In like manner it abolishes time and space. The influence of the senses has, in most men, overpowered the mind to that degree, that the walls of time and space have come to look solid, real, and insurmountable, and to speak with levity of these limits is, in the world, the sign of insanity. Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul. A man is capable of abolishing them both. The spirit sports with time—

"Can crowd eternity into an hour,  
Or stretch an hour to eternity."

1841

### COMPENSATION

Whether one accepts Emerson's "Law of Compensation" in this life or recognizes, as he does not, the part played by blind chance, this essay provokes thought. Emerson would be the last to wish all readers to assent to all his statements, or to try to defend them on grounds of reason, as he said in his letter to the Rev. Henry Ware, Jr. The richly metaphorical texture of his thought and expression and the abundance of his allusions should be noted

The wings of Time are black and white,  
Pied with morning and with night  
Mountain tall and ocean deep  
Trembling balance duly keep  
In changing moon, in tidal wave,  
Glow the feud of Want and Have  
Gauge of more and less through space  
Electric star and pencil plays  
The lonely Earth amid the balls  
That hurry through the eternal halls,  
A makeweight flying to the void,  
Supplemental asteroid,  
Or compensatory spark,  
Shoots across the neutral Dark

Man's the elm, and Wealth the vine,  
Stanch and strong the tendrils twine  
Though the frail ruyglets thee deceive,  
None from its stock that vine can weave.

Fear not, then, thou child infirm,  
There's no god dare wrong a worm  
Laurel crowns cleave to deserts  
And power to him who power exerts,  
Hast not thy share? On winged feet,  
Lo! it rushes thee to meet,  
And all that Nature made thy own,  
Floating in air or pent in stone,  
Will rive the hills and swim the sea  
And, like thy shadow, follow thee.

EVER since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep, for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm and the dwelling-house, greetings, relations, debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition, and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared moreover that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey, that would not suffer us to lose our way.

I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful, that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offense appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

Yet what was the import of this teaching?

What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was,—“We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now”;—or, to push it to its extreme import,—“You sin now, we shall sin by and by, we would sin now, if we could, not being successful we expect our revenge tomorrow.”

The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful, that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth, announcing the presence of the soul, the omnipotence of the will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood.

I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. But men are better than their theology. Their daily life gives it the lie. Every ingenuous and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience, and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

I shall attempt in this and the following

chapter<sup>1</sup> to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

Polarity, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light; in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female, in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals, in the equation of quantity and quality in the fluids of the animal body, in the systole and diastole of the heart, in the undulations of fluids and of sound, in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity, in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle, the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole, as, spirit, matter, man, woman; odd, even; subjective, objective, in, out; upper, under; motion, rest, yea, nay.

Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist has observed that no creatures are favorites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

The theory of the mechanic forces is another example. What we gain in power is lost in time, and the converse. The periodic or compensating errors of the planets is another instance. The influences of climate and soil in political history is another. The cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers, or scorpions.

The same dualism underlies the nature and

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the essay, “Spiritual Laws,” which immediately followed in *Essays, First Series*.

condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, Nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some leveling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society and by temper and position a bad citizen,—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him?—Nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smooths his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate<sup>1</sup> the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in and keeps her balance true.

The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the charges of that eminence. With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate

father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration, and affect them by faithfulness to his truth, and become a byword and a hussing.

This law writes the laws of cities and nations. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things refuse to be mismanaged long.<sup>1</sup> *Res nolunt diu male administrari.* Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. If the law is too mild, private vengeance comes in. If the government is a terrific democracy, the pressure is resisted by an overcharge of energy in the citizen, and life glows with a fiercer flame. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigors or felicities of condition and to establish themselves with great indifference under all varieties of circumstances. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same,—in Turkey and in New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies, and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction, is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of human life; of its good and ill, its trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man and recite all his destiny.

The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule.

<sup>1</sup> soften

<sup>1</sup> This sentence translates the Latin which follows.

which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity,—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so is the repulsion, if the force, so the limitation.

Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspiration; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it." Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. *Oi kúßoi Aúds del eúterrounti*—The dice of God are always loaded.<sup>1</sup> The world looks like a multiplication-table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner; first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The casual retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding, it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offense, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the

cause, the end preexists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

Whilst thus the world will be whole and refuses to be disparted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example,—to gratify the senses we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has always been dedicated to the solution of one problem,—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, etc., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair, that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless, to get a *one end*, without an *other end*. The soul says, "Eat", the body would feast. The soul says, "The man and woman shall be one flesh and one soul"; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, "Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue", the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

The soul strives again to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it,—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody, to set up for himself; to truck and higgler for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride, to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern, that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. They think that to be great is to possess one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side, the bitter.

Thus dividing and detaching is steadily counteracted. Up to this day it must be owned no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water reunites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, as soon as we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light without a shadow. "Drive out Nature with a fork, she comes running back."<sup>1</sup>

Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know, that

<sup>1</sup> translation of the preceding Greek quotation

<sup>1</sup> translation of an old Latin saying quoted by Horace, *Epistles*, I, x, 24

they do not touch him;—but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the bad, that the experiment would not be tried,—since to try it is to be mad,—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurement of an object and not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail, and thinks he can cut off that which he would have from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!"<sup>1</sup>

The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind, but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to reasons by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England. Prometheus knows one secret<sup>2</sup> which Jove must bargain for; Minerva, another. He cannot get his own thunders, Minerva keeps the key of them.—

Of all the gods, I only know the keys  
That ope the solid doors within whose vaults  
His thunders sleep.<sup>3</sup>

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics; and it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral. Aurora forgot to ask youth for her lover, and though Tithonus is immortal, he is old.

<sup>1</sup> St Augustine, *Confessions*, I, xviii    <sup>2</sup> how Jove was to be overthrown    <sup>3</sup> translation from a speech by Athens (Minerva) in Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, line 830

Achilles is not quite invulnerable; the sacred waters did not wash the heel by which Thetis held him. Siegfried, in the *Nibelungen*, is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered is mortal. And so it must be. There is a crack in every thing God has made. It would seem there is always this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws,—thus backstroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, all things are sold.

This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the universe and lets no offense go unchastised. The Furies, they said, are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theagenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it, that which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by

the interfering volutions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakspeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate, and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and workshops by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as the birds and flies.

All things are double, one against another. —Tit for tat, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, blood for blood, measure for measure; love for love —Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself.—What will you have? quoth God, pay for it and take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The Devil is an ass.

It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will or against his will he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or rather it is a harpoon hurled at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in the boat, and, if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

You cannot do wrong without suffering

wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke. The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and ninpins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong, he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him, his eyes no longer seek mine, there is war between us, there is hate in him and fear in me.

All the old abuses in society, universal and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloudless noon, the emerald of Polycrates,<sup>1</sup> the awe

<sup>1</sup> Warned that he might incur the envy of the gods on account of his continued prosperity, Polycrates of Samos threw his cherished emerald ring into the sea. It was later found in a fish and restored to Polycrates who was soon taken by an enemy and executed. Herodotus tells the story in his history.



of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot<sup>1</sup> as they go along, and that a man often pays debt for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbor's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other, that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbor, and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay, for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base,—and that is the one base thing in the universe,—to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm<sup>2</sup> worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

Labor is watched over by the same pitiless

laws. Cheapest, say the prudent, is the dearest labor. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skilful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because of the dual constitution of things, in labor as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labor is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labor cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power, but they who do not the thing have not the power.

Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that every thing has its price,—and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get any thing without its price,—is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkle on his chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop-bill as in the history of a state,—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

<sup>1</sup> assessments levied according to ability to pay  
<sup>2</sup> breed, see Exodus 16. 20

The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Some damning circumstance always transpires. The laws and substances of nature,—water, snow, wind, gravitation,—become penalties to the thief.

On the other hand, the law holds with equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns every thing to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm, but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon, when he approached cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offense, poverty, prove benefactors —

Winds blow and waters roll  
Strength to the brave, and power and deity,  
Yet in themselves are nothing.<sup>1</sup>

The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns, destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to enter-

tain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung and sorely assailed. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something, he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit, has got moderation and real skill. The wise man throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect, and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfilment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer

<sup>1</sup> quoted from Wordsworth's sonnet, "September, 1808, near Dover"

The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason, and traversing<sup>1</sup> its work. The mob is men voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities, as to individuals, when the truth is seen and the martyrs are justified.

Thus do all things preach the indifference of circumstances. The man is all. Every thing has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifference. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations,—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul is. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure

<sup>1</sup> contradicting

of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a background the living universe paints itself forth, but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far deceases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also, but, should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account

Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom, they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action I properly *am*, in a virtuous act I add to the world, I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses limits, and always affirms an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

Man's life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, of the *presence of the soul*, and not of its absence, the brave man is greater than the coward, the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. Material good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labor which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example to

find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new burdens. I do not wish more external goods,—neither possessions, nor honors, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard,—  
 10 “Nothing can work me damage except myself, the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer except by my own fault.”

In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of *More* and *Less*. How can *Less* not feel the pain, how not feel indignation or malevolence towards *More*? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. He almost shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me.  
 20 If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbors, I can yet love; I can still receive, and he that loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the nature of the soul to appropriate all things. Jesus and Shakespeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate  
 30 them in my own conscious domain. His virtue,—is not that mine? His wit,—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit.

Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shellfish crawls out of its  
 50 beautiful but stony case, because it no longer

admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house. In proportion to the vigor of the individual these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very loosely about him, becoming as it were a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates and of no settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of today scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapsed estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not cooperating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

20 We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolaters of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in today to rival or recreate that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the  
 30 spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, “Up and onward for evermore!” We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the new; and so we walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius, for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch  
 50 of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or

a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years, and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banyan of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men.

1841

### From ENGLISH TRAITS

When he visited England in 1833 Emerson had published nothing and was little known. His second visit, in 1847-48, was preceded by the publication of *Nature* and the first and second volumes of *Essays*. It was made in response to an invitation to deliver courses of lectures in the larger English towns. Much friendly hospitality was extended to him and he met many celebrities, among them Wordsworth and Carlyle whom he had known on his first visit. He observed and pondered English traits, and on his return to America he lectured on England to his countrymen. In the course of seven years he prepared these lectures for the press. *English Traits* was published in 1856. Emerson wrote of the English thoughtfully and without the touches of harshness or denision usual in accounts of a foreign country by a visitor. There are no gossiping journalistic chronicles in Emerson's volume. His interest lay not in accounts of large cities, social events and customs, or literary celebrities, but went deeper. Dr. Richard Garnett said of the book, "Emerson is so little concerned with the fashion of the day and so much with the solid foundations of English life that his book should endure as long as they do." Carlyle wrote to Emerson of it, "I believe it to be worth all the Books ever written by New England of the Old."

### CHAPTER VIII

#### Character

THE English race are reputed morose. I do not know that they have sadder brows than their neighbors of northern climates. They are sad by comparison with the singing and dancing nations: not sadder, but slow and staid, as finding their joys at home. They, too, believe that where there is no enjoyment of life

there can be no vigor and art in speech or thought; that your merry heart goes all the way, your sad one tires in a mile. This trait of gloom has been fixed on them by French travelers, who, from Froissart, Voltaire, Le Sage, Mirabeau, down to the lively journalists of the *feuilletons*,<sup>1</sup> have spent their wit on the solemnity of their neighbors. The French say, gay conversation is unknown in their island. The Englishman finds no relief from reflection, except in reflection. When he wishes for amusement, he goes to work. His hilarity is like an attack of fever. Religion, the theater, and the reading the books of his country, all feed and increase his natural melancholy. The police does not interfere with public diversions. It thinks itself bound in duty to respect the pleasures and rare gayety of this inconsolable nation, and their well-known courage is entirely attributable to their disgust of life.

I suppose their gravity of demeanor and their few words have obtained this reputation. As compared with the Americans, I think them cheerful and contented. Young people in this country are much more prone to melancholy. The English have a mild aspect and a ringing cheerful voice. They are large-natured and not so easily amused as the southerners, and are among them as grown people among children, requiring war, or trade, or engineering, or science, instead of frivolous games. They are proud and private, and even if disposed to recreation, will avoid an open garden. They sported sadly; *ils s'amusaient tristement, selon la coutume de leur pays*,<sup>2</sup> said Froissart; and I suppose never nation built their party-walls so thick, or their garden-fences so high. Meat and wine produce no effect on them. They are just as cold, quiet and composed, at the end, as at the beginning of dinner.

The reputation of taciturnity they have enjoyed for six or seven hundred years, and a kind of pride in bad public speaking is noted in the House of Commons, as if they were willing to show that they did not live by their tongues, or thought they spoke well enough if they had the tone of gentlemen. In mixed company they shut their mouths. A Yorkshire

<sup>1</sup> parts of French newspapers devoted to light literature, criticism, etc. <sup>2</sup> "They sported sadly according to the custom of their country."

millowner told me he had ridden more than once all the way from London to Leeds, in the first-class carriage, with the same persons, and no word exchanged. The club-houses were established to cultivate social habits, and it is rare that more than two eat together, and oftenest one eats alone. Was it then a stroke of humor in the serious Swedenborg, or was it only his pitiless logic, that made him shut up the English souls in a heaven by themselves?

They are contradictorily described as sour, splenetic, and stubborn,—and as mild, sweet, and sensible. The truth is they have great range and variety of character. Commerce sends abroad multitudes of different classes. The choleric Welshman, the fervid Scot, the bilious resident in the East or West Indies, are wide of the perfect behavior of the educated and dignified man of family. So is the burly farmer; so is the country squire, with his narrow and violent life. In every inn is the Commercial-Room, in which "travelers," or bagmen who carry patterns and solicit orders for the manufacturers, are wont to be entertained. It easily happens that this class should characterize England to the foreigner, who meets them on the road and at every public house, whilst the gentry avoid the taverns, or seclude themselves whilst in them.

But these classes are the right English stock, and may fairly show the national qualities, before yet art and education have dealt with them. They are good lovers, good haters, slow but obstinate admirers, and in all things very much steeped in their temperament, like men hardly awaked from deep sleep, which they enjoy. Their habits and instincts cleave to nature. They are of the earth, earthy, and of the sea, as the sea-kinds, attached to it for what it yields them, and not from any sentiment. They are full of coarse strength, rude exercise, butcher's meat and sound sleep; and suspect any poetic insinuation or any hint for the conduct of life which reflects on this animal existence, as if somebody were fumbling at the umbilical cord and might stop their supplies. They doubt a man's sound judgment if he does not eat with appetite, and shake their heads if he is particularly chaste. Take them as they come, you shall find in the common

people a surly indifference, sometimes gruffness and ill temper; and in minds of more power, magazines of inexhaustible war, challenging

"The ruggeddest hour that time and spite dare bring

To frown upon the enraged Northumberland."<sup>1</sup>

They are headstrong believers and defenders of their opinion, and not less resolute in maintaining their whim and perversity. Hezekiah Woodward wrote a book against the Lord's Prayer. And one can believe that Burton, the Anatomist of Melancholy, having predicted from the stars the hour of his death, slipped the knot himself round his own neck, not to falsify his horoscope.

Their looks bespeak an invincible stoutness: they have extreme difficulty to run away, and will die game. Wellington said of the young coxcombs of the Life-Guards, delicately brought up, "But the puppies fight well"; and Nelson said of his sailors, "They really mind shot no more than peas." Of absolute stoutness no nation has more or better examples. They are good at storming redoubts, at boarding frigates, at dying in the last ditch, or any desperate service which has daylight and honor in it; but not, I think, at enduring the rack, or any passive obedience, like jumping off a castle-roof at the word of a czar. Being both vascular and highly organized, so as to be very sensible of pain; and intellectual, so as to see reason and glory in a matter.

Of that constitutional force which yields the supplies of the day, they have the more than enough; the excess which creates courage on fortitude, genius in poetry, invention in mechanics, enterprise in trade, magnificence in wealth, splendor in ceremonies, petulance and projects in youth. The young men have a rude health which runs into peccant humors. They drink brandy like water, cannot expend their quantities of waste strength on riding, hunting, swimming and fencing, and run into absurd frolics with the gravity of the Eumenides. They stoutly carry into every nook and corner of the earth their turbulent sense;

<sup>1</sup> from Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, Part II, I, 1

leaving no lie uncontradicted; no pretension unexamined. They chew hasheesh, cut themselves with poisoned creases; swing their ham-mock in the boughs of the Bohon Upas;<sup>1</sup> taste every poison; buy every secret; at Naples they put St. Januarius's blood in an alembic, they saw a hole into the head of the "winking Virgin," to know why she winks, measure with an English footrule every cell of the Inquisition, every Turkish caaba, every Holy of holies; translate and send to Bentley the arcanum bribed and bullied away from shuddering Bramins; and measure their own strength by the terror they cause. These travelers are of every class, the best and the worst; and it may easily happen that those of rudest behavior are taken notice of and remembered. The Saxon melancholy in the vulgar rich and poor appears as gushes of ill-humor, which every check exasperates into sarcasm and vituperation. There are multitudes of rude young English who have the self-sufficiency and bluntness of their nation, and who, with their disdain of the rest of mankind and with this indigestion and choler, have made the English traveler a proverb for uncomfortable and offensive manners. It was no bad description of the Briton generically, what was said two hundred years ago of one particular Oxford scholar: "He was a very bold man, uttered any thing that came into his mind, not only among his companions, but in public coffeehouses, and would often speak his mind of particular persons then accidentally present, without examining the company he was in, for which he was often reprimanded and several times threatened to be kicked and beaten."

The common Englishman is prone to forget a cardinal article in the bill of social rights, that every man has a right to his own ears. No man can claim to usurp more than a few cubic feet of the audibilities of a public room, or to put upon the company with the loud statement of his crotchets or personalities.

But it is in the deep traits of race that the fortunes of nations are written, and however derived,—whether a happier tribe or mixture of tribes, the air, or what circumstance that

mixed for them the golden mean of temperament,—here exists the best stock in the world, broad-fronted, broad-bottomed, best for depth, range and equability; men of aplomb and reserves, great range and many moods, strong instincts, yet apt for culture; war-class as well as clerks, earls and tradesmen; wise minority, as well as foolish majority; abysmal temperament, hiding wells of wrath, and glooms on which no sunshine settles, alternated with a common sense and humanity which hold them fast to every piece of cheerful duty, making this temperament a sea to which all storms are superficial, a race to which their fortunes flow, as if they alone had the elastic organization at once fine and robust enough for dominion, as if the burly inexpressive, now mute and contumacious, now fierce and sharp-tongued dragon, which once made the island light with his fiery breath, had bequeathed his ferocity to his conqueror. They hide virtues under vices, or the semblance of them. It is the misshapen hairy Scandinavian troll again, who lifts the cart out of the mire, or "threshes the corn that ten day-laborers could not end,"<sup>1</sup> but it is done in the dark and with muttered maledictions. He is a churl with a soft place in his heart, whose speech is a brash of bitter waters, but who loves to help you at a pinch. He says no, and serves you, and your thanks disgust him. Here was lately a cross-grained miser, odd and ugly, resembling in countenance the portrait of Punch with the laugh left out, rich by his own industry, sulking in a lonely house, who never gave a dinner to any man and disdained all courtesies, yet as true a worshipper of beauty in form and color as ever existed, and profusely pouring over the cold mind of his countrymen creations of grace and truth, removing the reproach of sterility from English art, catching from their savage climate every fine hunt, and importing into their galleries every tint and trait of sunnier cities and skies, making an era in painting, and when he saw that the splendor of one of his pictures in the Exhibition dimmed his rival's that hung next it, secretly took a brush and blackened his own.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> a Javanese tree the juice of which is used as an arrow poison

<sup>2</sup> quoted from Milton's *L'Allegro*, lines 108-9    <sup>3</sup> reference to a story about the English painter, Turner

*They do not wear their heart in their sleeve for daws to peck at. They have that phlegm or staidness which it is a compliment to disturb.* "Great men," said Aristotle, "are always of a nature originally melancholy." 'Tis the habit of a mind which attaches to abstractions with a passion which gives vast results. They dare to displease, they do not speak to expectation. They like the sayers of No, better than the sayers of Yes. Each of them has an opinion which he feels it becomes him to express all the more that it differs from yours. They are meditating opposition. This gravity is inseparable from minds of great resources.

There is an English hero superior to the French, the German, the Italian, or the Greek. When he is brought to the strife with fate, he sacrifices a richer material possession, and on more purely metaphysical grounds. He is there with his own consent, face to face with fortune, which he defies. On deliberate choice and from grounds of character, he has elected his part to live and die for, and dies with grandeur. This race has added new elements to humanity and has a deeper root in the world.

They have great range of scale, from ferocity to exquisite refinement. With larger scale, they have great retrieving power. After running each tendency to an extreme, they try another tack with equal heat. More intellectual than other races, when they live with other races they do not take their language, but bestow their own. They subsidize other nations, and are not subsidized. They proselyte, and are not proselyted. They assimilate other races to themselves, and are not assimilated. The English did not calculate the conquest of the Indies. It fell to their character. So they administer, in different parts of the world, the codes of every empire and race; in Canada, old French law, in the Mauritius, the Code Napoléon, in the West Indies, the edicts of the Spanish Cortés, in the East Indies, the Laws of Menu, in the Isle of Man, of the Scandinavian Thing; at the Cape of Good Hope, of the old Netherlands; and in the Ionian Islands, the Pandects of Justinian.

They are very conscious of their advantageous position in history. England is the lawgiver, the patron, the instructor, the ally. Compare the tone of the French and of the

English press: the first querulous, capricious, sensitive about English opinion; the English press never timorous about French opinion, but arrogant and contemptuous.

They are testy and headstrong through an excess of will and bias, churlish as men sometimes please to be who do not forget a debt, who ask no favors and who will do what they like with their own. With education and intercourse these asperities wear off and leave the good-will pure. If anatomy is reformed according to national tendencies, I suppose the spleen will hereafter be found in the Englishman, not found in the American, and differing the one from the other. I anticipate another anatomical discovery, that this organ will be found to be cortical and caducous, that they are superficially morose, but at last tenderhearted, herein differing from Rome and the Latin nations. Nothing savage, nothing mean resides in the English heart. They are subject to panics of credulity and of rage, but the temper of the nation, however disturbed, settles itself soon and easily, as, in this temperate zone, the sky after whatever storms clears again, and serenity is its normal condition.

A saving stupidity masks and protects their perception, as the curtain of the eagle's eye. Our swifter Americans, when they first deal with English, pronounce them stupid, but, later, do them justice as people who wear well, or hide their strength. To understand the power of performance that is in their finest wits, in the patient Newton, or in the versatile transcendent poets, or in the Dugdales, Gibbons, Hallams, Eldons, and Peels, one should see how English day-laborers hold out. High and low, they are of an unctuous texture. There is an adipocere<sup>1</sup> in their constitution, as if they had oil also for their mental wheels and could perform vast amounts of work without damaging themselves.

Even the scale of expense on which people live, and to which scholars and professional men conform, proves the tension of their muscle, when vast numbers are found who can each lift this enormous load. I might even add, their daily feasts argue a savage vigor of body.

<sup>1</sup> waxy substance into which dead tissue is sometimes changed by continued moisture



No nation was ever so rich in able men; "Gentlemen," as Charles I said of Strafford, "whose abilities might make a prince rather afraid than ashamed in the greatest affairs of state"; men of such temper, that, like Baron Vere, "had one seen him returning from a victory, he would by his silence have suspected that he had lost the day; and, had he beheld him in a retreat, he would have collected him a conqueror by the cheerfulness of his spirit."<sup>1</sup>

The following passage from the "Heimekrungla" might almost stand as a portrait of the modern Englishman—"Haldor was very stout and strong and remarkably handsome in appearances. King Harold gave him this testimony, that he, among all his men, cared least about doubtful circumstances, whether they betokened danger or pleasure, for, whatever turned up, he was never in higher nor in lower spirits, never slept less nor more on account of them, nor ate nor drank but according to his custom. Haldor was not a man of many words, but short in conversation, told his opinion bluntly and was obstinate and hard; and thus could not please the king, who had many clever people about him, zealous in his service. Haldor remained a short time with the king, and then came to Iceland, where he took up his abode in Hiardaholt and dwelt in that farm to a very advanced age."<sup>2</sup>

The national temper, in the civil history, is not flashy or whiffing. The slow, deep English mass smoulders with fire, which at last sets all its borders in flame. The wrath of London is not French wrath, but has a long memory, and, in its hottest heat, a register and rule.

Half their strength they put not forth. They are capable of a sublime resolution, and if hereafter the war of races, often predicted, and making itself a war of opinions also (a question of despotism and liberty coming from Eastern Europe), should menace the English civilization, these sea-kings may take once again to their floating castles and find a new home and a second millennium of power in their colonies.

The stability of England is the security of the modern world. If the English race were as mutable as the French, what reliance? But the English stand for liberty. The conservative, money-loving, lord-loving English are yet liberty-loving; and so freedom is safe: for they have more personal force than any other people. The nation always resists the immoral action of their government. They think humanely on the affairs of France, of Turkey, of Poland, of Hungary, of Schleswig Holstein, though overborne by the statecraft of the rulers at last.

Does the early history of each tribe show the permanent bias, which, though not less potent, is masked as the tribe spreads its activity into colonies, commerce, codes, arts, letters? The early history shows it, as the musician plays the air which he proceeds to conceal in a tempest of variations. In Alfred, in the Northmen, one may read the genius of the English society, namely that private life is the place of honor. Glory, a career, and ambition, words familiar to the longitude of Paris, are seldom heard in English speech. Nelson wrote from their hearts his homely telegraph, "England expects every man to do his duty."

For actual service, for the dignity of a profession, or to appease diseased or inflamed talent, the army and navy may be entered (the worst boys doing well in the navy), and the civil service in departments where serious official work is done, and they hold in esteem the barrister engaged in the severer studies of the law. But the calm, sound and most British Briton shrinks from public life as charlatanism, and respects an economy founded on agriculture, coal-mines, manufactures or trade, which secures an independence through the creation of real values.

They wish neither to command nor obey, but to be kings in their own houses. They are intellectual and deeply enjoy literature, they like well to have the world served up to them in books, maps, models, and every mode of exact information, and, though not creators in art, they value its refinement. They are ready for leisure, can direct and fill their own day, nor need so much as others the constraint of a necessity. But the history of the nation discloses, at every turn, this original

<sup>1</sup> Fuller, *Worthies of England* [Emerson's note]  
<sup>2</sup> *Heimekrungla*, Laung's translation, vol. iii. p. 37 [Emerson's note]

predilection for private independence, and however this inclination may have been disturbed by the bribes with which their vast colonial power has warped men out of orbit, the inclination endures, and forms and reforms the laws, letters, manners and occupations. They choose that welfare which is compatible with the commonwealth, knowing that such alone is stable; as wise merchants prefer investments in the three per cents.

1856

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THOREAU

First published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1862 Reprinted in *Lectures and Biographical Sketches* (1884) Written not long after the death of Thoreau It is one of the most readable of Emerson's biographies He writes detachedly of Thoreau, neither overpraising him nor speaking too critically With the passing of time Thoreau has loomed larger than his contemporaries could well have foreseen Emerson spoke of him more generously than did Lowell See the latter's essay, "Thoreau," and, also, his *A Fable for Critics*

A queen rejoices in her peers,  
And wary Nature knows her own,  
By court and city, dale and down,  
And like a lover volunteers,  
And to her son will treasures more,  
And more to purpose, freely pour  
In one wood talk, than learned men  
Will find with glass in ten times ten

It seemed as if the breezes brought him,  
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him,  
As if by secret sign he knew  
Where in far fields the orchus grew

HENRY DAVID THOREAU was the last male descendant of a French ancestor who came to this country from the Isle of Guernsey. His character exhibited occasional traits drawn from this blood, in singular combination with a very strong Saxon genius.

He was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on the 12th of July, 1817. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1837, but without any literary distinction. An iconoclast in literature, he seldom thanked colleges for their service to him, holding them in small esteem, whilst yet his debt to them was important.

After leaving the University, he joined his brother in teaching a private school, which he soon renounced. His father was a manufacturer of lead-pencils, and Henry applied himself for a time to this craft, believing he could make a better pencil than was then in use. After completing his experiments, he exhibited his work to chemists and artists in Boston, and having obtained their certificates to its excellence and to its equality with the best London manufacture, he returned home contented. His friends congratulated him that he had now opened his way to fortune. But he replied that he should never make another pencil. "Why should I? I would not do again what I have done once." He resumed his endless walks and miscellaneous studies, making every day some new acquaintance with Nature, though as yet never speaking of zoology or botany, since, though very studious of natural facts, he was incurious of technical and textual science.

At this time, a strong, healthy youth, fresh from college, whilst all his companions were choosing their profession, or eager to begin some lucrative employment, it was inevitable that his thoughts should be exercised on the same question, and it required rare decision to refuse all the accustomed paths and keep his solitary freedom at the cost of disappointing the natural expectations of his family and friends. all the more difficult that he had a perfect probity, was exact in securing his own independence, and in holding every man to the like duty. But Thoreau never faltered. He was a born protestant. He declined to give up his large ambition of knowledge and action for any narrow craft or profession, aiming at a much more comprehensive calling, the art of living well. If he slighted and defied the opinions of others, it was only that he was more intent to reconcile his practice with his own belief. Never idle or self-indulgent, he preferred, when he wanted money, earning it by some piece of manual labor agreeable to him, as building a boat or a fence, planting, grafting, surveying, or other short work, to any long engagements. With his hardy habits and few wants, his skill in woodcraft, and his powerful arithmetic, he was very content to live in any part of the world. It would

cost him less time to supply his wants than another. He was therefore secure of his leisure.

A natural skill for mensuration, growing out of his mathematical knowledge and his habit of ascertaining the measures and distances of objects which interested him, the size of trees, the depth and extent of ponds and rivers, the height of mountains, and the air-line distance of his favorite summits,—this, and his intimate knowledge of the territory about Concord, made him drift into the profession of land-surveyor. It had the advantage for him that it led him continually into new and secluded grounds, and helped his studies of Nature. His accuracy and skill in this work were readily appreciated, and he found all the employment he wanted.

He could easily solve the problems of the surveyor, but he was daily beset with graver questions, which he manfully confronted. He interrogated every custom, and wished to settle all his practice on an ideal foundation. He was a protestant *à outrance*,<sup>1</sup> and few lives contain so many renunciations. He was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church, he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the State, he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun. He chose, wisely no doubt for himself, to be the bachelor of thought and Nature. He had no talent for wealth, and knew how to be poor without the least hint of squalor or inelegance. Perhaps he fell into his way of living without forecasting it much, but approved it with later wisdom. "I am often reminded," he wrote in his journal, "that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Croesus, my aims must be still the same, and my means essentially the same." He had no temptations to fight against,—no appetites, no passions, no taste for elegant trifles. A fine house, dress, the manners and talk of highly cultivated people, were all thrown away on him. He much preferred a good Indian, and considered these refinements as impediments to conversation, wishing to meet his companion on the simplest terms. He declined invitations to dinner-parties, because there each was in every one's way, and he

<sup>1</sup> "to the utmost"

could not meet the individuals to any purpose. "They make their pride," he said, "in making their dinner cost much; I make my pride in making my dinner cost little." When asked at table what dish he preferred, he answered, "The nearest." He did not like the taste of wine, and never had a vice in his life. He said, "I have a faint recollection of pleasure derived from smoking dried lily-stems, before I was a man. I had commonly a supply of these. I have never smoked anything more noxious."

He chose to be rich by making his wants few, and supplying them himself. In his travels, he used the railroad only to get over so much country as was unimportant to the present purpose, walking hundreds of miles, avoiding taverns, buying a lodging in farmers' and fishermen's houses, as cheaper, and more agreeable to him, and because there he could better find the men and the information he wanted.

There was somewhat military in his nature, not to be subdued, always manly and able, but rarely tender, as if he did not feel himself except in opposition. He wanted a fallacy to oppose, a blunder to pilory, I may say required a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum, to call his powers into full exercise. It cost him nothing to say No, indeed he found it much easier than to say Yes. It seemed as if his first instinct on hearing a proposition was to controvert it, so impatient was he of the limitations of our daily thought. This habit, of course, is a little chilling to the social affections; and though the companion would in the end acquit him of any malice or untruth, yet it mars conversation. Hence, no equal companion stood in affectionate relations with one so pure and guileless. "I love Henry," said one of his friends, "but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I should at soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree."

Yet, hermit and stoic as he was, he was really fond of sympathy, and threw himself heartily and childlike into the company of young people whom he loved, and whom he delighted to entertain, as he only could, with the varied and endless anecdotes of his experiences by field and river; and he was always ready to lead a huckleberry-party or a search for chestnuts or grapes. Talking, one day, of a

public discourse, Henry remarked that whatever succeeded with the audience was bad. I said, "Who would not like to write something which all can read, like *Robinson Crusoe*? and who does not see with regret that his page is not solid with a right maternalistic treatment, which delights everybody?" Henry objected, of course, and vaunted the better lectures which reached only a few persons. But, at supper, a young girl, understanding that he was to lecture at the Lyceum, sharply asked him "whether his lecture would be a nice, interesting story, such as she wished to hear, or whether it was one of those old philosophical things that she did not care about." Henry turned to her, and bethought himself, and, I saw, was trying to believe that he had matter that might fit her and her brother, who were to sit up and go to the lecture, if it was a good one for them.

He was a speaker and actor of the truth, born such, and was ever running into dramatic situations from this cause. In any circumstance it interested all bystanders to know what part Henry would take, and what he would say; and he did not disappoint expectation, but used an original judgment on each emergency. In 1845 he built himself a small framed house on the shores of Walden Pond, and lived there two years alone, a life of labor and study. This action was quite native and fit for him. No one who knew him would tax him with affectation. He was more unlike his neighbors in his thought than in his action. As soon as he had exhausted the advantages of that solitude, he abandoned it. In 1847, not approving some uses to which the public expenditure was applied, he refused to pay his town tax, and was put in jail. A friend paid the tax for him, and he was released. The like annoyance was threatened the next year. But as his friends paid the tax, notwithstanding his protest, I believe he ceased to resist. No opposition or ridicule had any weight with him. He coldly and fully stated his opinion without affecting to believe that it was the opinion of the company. It was of no consequence if every one present held the opposite opinion. On one occasion he went to the University Library to procure some books. The librarian refused to lend them. Mr. Thoreau repaired to

the President, who stated to him the rules and usages, which permitted the loan of books to resident graduates, to clergymen who were alumni, and to some others resident within a circle of ten miles' radius from the College. Mr. Thoreau explained to the President that the railroad had destroyed the old scale of distances,—that the library was useless, yes, and President and College useless, on the terms of his rules,—that the one benefit he owed to the College was its library,—that, at this moment, not only his want of books was imperative but he wanted a large number of books, and assured him that he, Thoreau, and not the librarian, was the proper custodian of these. In short, the President found the petitioner so formidable, and the rules getting to look so ridiculous, that he ended by giving him a privilege which in his hands proved unlimited thereafter.

No truer American existed than Thoreau. His preference of his country and condition was genuine, and his aversion from English and European manners and tastes almost reached contempt. He listened impatiently to news or *bon-mots* gleaned from London circles, and though he tried to be civil, these anecdotes fatigued him. The men were all imitating each other, and on a small mould. Why can they not live as far apart as possible, and each be a man by himself? What he sought was the most energetic nature; and he wished to go to Oregon, not to London. "In every part of Great Britain," he wrote in his diary, "are discovered traces of the Romans, their funeral urns, their camps, their dwellings. But New England, at least, is not based on any Roman ruins. We have not to lay the foundations of our houses on the ashes of a former civilization."

But idealist as he was, standing for abolition of slavery, abolition of tariffs, almost for abolition of government, it is needless to say he found himself not only unrepresented in actual politics, but almost equally opposed to every class of reformers. Yet he paid the tribute of his uniform respect to the Anti-slavery party. One man, whose personal acquaintance he had formed, he honored with exceptional regard. Before the first friendly word had been spoken for Captain John

Brown, he sent notices to most houses in Concord that he would speak in a public hall on the condition and character of John Brown, on Sunday evening, and invited all people to come. The Republican Committee, the Abolitionist Committee, sent him word that it was premature and not advisable. He replied, —“I did not send to you for advice, but to announce that I am to speak.” The hall was filled at an early hour by people of all parties, and his earnest eulogy of the hero was heard by all respectfully, by many with a sympathy that surprised themselves.

It was said of Plotinus that he was ashamed of his body, and ‘tis very likely he had good reason for it,—that his body was a bad servant, and he had not skill in dealing with the material world, as happens often to men of abstract intellect. But Mr. Thoreau was equipped with a most adapted and serviceable body. He was of short stature, firmly built, of light complexion, with strong, serious blue eyes, and a grave aspect,—his face covered in the late years with a becoming beard. His senses were acute, his frame well-knit and hardy, his hands strong and skillful in the use of tools. And there was a wonderful fitness of body and mind. He could pace sixteen rods more accurately than another man could measure them with rod and chain. He could find his path in the woods at night, he said, better by his feet than his eyes. He could estimate the measure of a tree very well by his eye, he could estimate the weight of a calf or a pig, like a dealer. From a box containing a bushel or more of loose pencils, he could take up with his hands fast enough just a dozen pencils at every grasp. He was a good swimmer, runner, skater, boatman, and would probably outwalk most countrymen in a day’s journey. And the relation of body to mind was still finer than we have indicated. He said he wanted every stride his legs made. The length of his walk uniformly made the length of his writing. If shut up in the house he did not write at all.

He had a strong commonsense, like that which Rose Flammock, the weaver’s daughter in Scott’s romance,<sup>1</sup> commends in her father, as resembling a yardstick, which, whilst it measures dowlas<sup>2</sup> and diaper, can equally well

measure tapestry and cloth of gold. He had always a new resource. When I was planting forest trees, and had procured half a peck of acorns, he said that only a small portion of them would be sound, and proceeded to examine them and select the sound ones. But finding this took time, he said, “I think if you put them all into water the good ones will sink”; which experiment we tried with success. He could plan a garden or a house or a barn; would have been competent to lead a “Pacific Exploring Expedition”; could give judicious counsel in the gravest private or public affairs.

He lived for the day, not cumbered and mortified by his memory. If he brought you yesterday a new proposition, he would bring you today another not less revolutionary. A very industrious man, and setting, like all highly organized men, a high value on his time, he seemed the only man of leisure in town, always ready for any excursion that promised well, or for conversation prolonged into late hours. His trenchant sense was never stopped by his rules of daily prudence, but was always up to the new occasion. He liked and used the simplest food, yet, when some one urged a vegetable diet, Thoreau thought all diets a very small matter, saying that “the man who shoots the buffalo lives better than the man who boards at the Graham House.” He said, “You can sleep near the railroad, and never be disturbed: Nature knows very well what sounds are worth attending to, and has made up her mind not to hear the railroad-whistle. But things respect the devout mind, and a mental ecstasy was never interrupted.” He noted what repeatedly befell him, that, after receiving from a distance a rare plant, he would presently find the same in his own haunts. And those pieces of luck which happen only to good players happened to him. One day, walking with a stranger, who inquired where Indian arrow-heads could be found, he replied, “Everywhere,” and, stooping forward, picked one on the instant from the ground. At Mount Washington, in Tuckerman’s Ravine, Thoreau had a bad fall, and sprained his foot. As he was in the act of getting up from his fall, he saw for the first time the leaves of the *Arnica montana*.

<sup>1</sup> *The Betrothed* (1825)

<sup>2</sup> a coarse linen cloth

His robust common sense, armed with stout hands, keen perceptions, and strong will, cannot yet account for the superiority which shone in his simple and hidden life. I must add the cardinal fact, that there was excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted light, serving for the ornament of their writing, was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever faults or obstructions of temperament might cloud it, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In his youth, he said, one day, "The other world is all my art; my pencils will draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing else; I do not use it as a means." This was the muse and genius that ruled his opinions, conversation, studies, work, and course of life. This made him a searching judge of men. At first glance he measured his companion, and, though insensible to some fine traits of culture, could very well report his weight and caliber. And this made the impression of genius which his conversation sometimes gave.

He understood the matter in hand at a glance, and saw the limitations and poverty of those he talked with, so that nothing seemed concealed from such terrible eyes. I have repeatedly known young men of sensibility converted in a moment to the belief that this was the man they were in search of, the man of men, who could tell them all they should do. His own dealing with them was never affectionate, but superior, didactic, scorning their petty ways,—very slowly conceding, or not conceding at all, the promise of his society at their houses, or even at his own. "Would he not walk with them?" "He did not know. There was nothing so important to him as his walk; he had no walks to throw away on company." Visits were offered him from respectful parties, but he declined them. Admiring friends offered to carry him at their own cost to the Yellowstone River,—to the West Indies,—to South America. But though nothing could be more grave or considerate than his refusals, they remind one, in quite new relations, of that fop Brummell's reply to the gentleman who offered him his carriage in a

showyer, "But where will you ride, then?"—and what accusing silences, and what searching and irresistible speeches, battering down all defenses, his companions can remember!

Mr. Thoreau dedicated his genius with such entire love to the fields, hills, and waters of his native town, that he made them known and interesting to all reading Americans, and to people over the sea. The river on whose banks he was born and died he knew from its springs to its confluence with the Merrimack. He had made summer and winter observations on it for many years, and at every hour of the day and night. The result of the recent survey of the Water Commissioners appointed by the State of Massachusetts he had reached by his private experiments, several years earlier. Every fact which occurs in the bed, on the banks, or in the air over it; the fishes, and their spawning and nests, their manners, their food, the shad-flies which fill the air on a certain evening once a year, and which are snapped at by the fishes so ravenously that many of these die of repletion; the conical heaps of small stones on the river-shallows, the huge nests of small fishes, one of which will sometimes overflow a cart; the birds which frequent the stream, heron, duck, sheldrake, loon, osprey; the snake, muskrat, otter, woodchuck, and fox, on the banks; the turtle, frog, hyla, and cricket, which made the banks vocal,—were all known to him, and, as it were, townsmen and fellow-creatures; so that he felt an absurdity or violence in any narrative of one of these by itself apart, and still more of its dimensions on an inch-rule, or in the exhibition of its skeleton, or the specimen of a squirrel or a bird in brandy. He liked to speak of the manners of the river, as itself a lawful creature, yet with exactness, and always to an observed fact. As he knew the river, so the ponds in this region.

One of the weapons he used, more important to him than microscope or alcohol-receiver to other investigators, was a whim which grew on him by indulgence, yet appeared in gravest statement, namely, of extolling his own town and neighborhood as the most favored center for natural observation. He remarked that the Flora of Massachusetts embraced almost all the important plants of America,—most of the oaks, most of the

willows, the best pines, the ash, the maple, the birch, the elm. He returned Kane's "Arctic Voyage" to a friend of whom he had borrowed it, with the remark, that "most of the phenomena noted might be observed in Concord." He seemed a little envious of the Pole, for the coincident sunrise and sunset, or five minutes' day after six months: a splendid fact, which Annals<sup>1</sup> had never afforded him. He found red snow in one of his walks, and told me that he expected to find yet the *Victoria regia*<sup>2</sup> in Concord. He was the attorney of the indigenous plants, and owned to a preference of the weeds to the imported plants, as of the Indian to the civilized man, and noticed, with pleasure, that the willow bean-poles of his neighbor had grown more than his beans. "See these weeds," he said, "which have been hoed at by a million farmers all spring and summer, and yet have prevailed, and just now come out triumphant over all lanes, pastures, fields, and gardens, such is their vigor. We have insulted them with low names, too,—as Pigweed, Wormwood, Chickweed, Shad-blossom." He says, "They have brave names, too,—Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchier, Amaranth, etc."

I think his fancy for referring everything to the meridian of Concord did not grow out of any ignorance or depreciation of other longitudes or latitudes, but was rather a playful expression of his conviction of the indifference of all places, and that the best place for each is where he stands. He expressed it once in this wise: "I think nothing is to be hoped from you, if this bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter to you to eat than any other in this world, or in any world."

The other weapon with which he conquered all obstacles in science was patience. He knew how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits, nay, moved by curiosity, should come to him and watch him.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with him. He knew the country like a fox or a bird, and passed through it as freely by paths

of his own. He knew every track in the snow or on the ground, and what creature had taken this path before him. One must submit abjectly to such a guide, and the reward was great. Under his arm he carried an old music-book to press plants; in his pocket, his diary and pencil, a spyglass for birds, microscope, jackknife, and twine. He wore a straw hat, stout shoes, strong gray trousers, to brave scrub-oaks and smilax, and to climb a tree for a hawk's or a squirrel's nest. He waded into the pool for the water-plants, and his strong legs were no insignificant part of his armor. On the day I speak of he looked for the *Menyanthes*,<sup>1</sup> detected it across the wide pool, and, on examination of the florets, decided that it had been in flower five days. He drew out of his breast-pocket his diary, and read the names of all the plants that should bloom on this day, whereof he kept account as a banker when his notes fall due. The *Cypripedium*<sup>2</sup> not due till tomorrow. He thought that, if waked up from a trance, in this swamp, he could tell by the plants what time of the year it was within two days. The redstart was flying about, and presently the fine grosbeaks, whose brilliant scarlet "makes the rash gazer wipe his eye,"<sup>3</sup> and whose fine clear note Thoreau compared to that of a tanager which has got rid of its hoarseness. Presently he heard a note which he called that of the night-warbler, a bird he had never identified, had been in search of twelve years, which always, when he saw it, was in the act of diving down into a tree or bush, and which it was in vain to seek; the only bird which sings indifferently by night and by day. I told him he must beware of finding and booking it, lest life should have nothing more to show him. He said, "What you seek in vain for, half your life, one day you come full upon, all the family at dinner. You seek it like a dream, and as soon as you find it you become its prey."

His interest in the flower or the bird lay very deep in his mind, was connected with Nature,—and the meaning of Nature was never attempted to be defined by him. He would not offer a memoir of his observa-

<sup>1</sup> a hill often visited by Thoreau, whose spelling for it is Annemack    <sup>2</sup> a kind of water lily

<sup>3</sup> a genus of bog plants    <sup>4</sup> the lady's-slipper    <sup>5</sup> the sixth line of George Herbert's "Virtue"

tions to the Natural History Society. "Why should I? To detach the description from its connections in my mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me; and they do not wish what belongs to it." His power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. He saw as with a microscope, heard as with an ear trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard. And yet none knew better than he that it is not the fact that imports, but the impression or effect of the fact on your mind. Every fact lay in glory in his mind, a type of the order and beauty of the whole.

His determination on Natural History was organic. He confessed that he sometimes felt like a hound or a panther, and, if born among Indians, would have been a fell hunter. But, restrained by his Massachusetts culture, he played out the game in this mild form of botany and ichthyology. His intimacy with animals suggested what Thomas Fuller records of Butler the apologist, that "either he had told the bees things or the bees had told him." Snakes coiled round his leg; the fishes swam into his hand, and he took them out of the water; he pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by the tail and took the foxes under his protection from the hunters. Our naturalist had perfect magnanimity, he had no secrets; he would carry you to the heron's haunt, or even to his most prized botanical swamp,—possibly knowing that you could never find it again, yet willing to take his risks.

No college ever offered him a diploma, or a professor's chair; no academy made him its corresponding secretary, its discoverer, or even its member. Perhaps these learned bodies feared the satire of his presence. Yet so much knowledge of Nature's secret and genius few others possessed; none in a more large and religious synthesis. For not a particle of respect had he to the opinions of any man or body of men, but homage solely to the truth itself; and as he discovered everywhere among doctors some leaning of courtesy, it discredited them. He grew to be revered and admired by his townsmen, who had at first known him only as an oddity. The farmers who employed him as a surveyor soon discovered his rare accuracy and skill, his knowl-

edge of their lands, of trees, of birds, of Indian remains and the like, which enabled him to tell every farmer more than he knew before of his own farm; so that he began to feel a little as if Mr. Thoreau had better rights in his land than he. They felt, too, the superiority of character which addressed all men with a native authority.

Indian relics abound in Concord,—arrow-heads, stone chisels, pestles, and fragments of pottery; and on the river-bank, large heaps of clam-shells and ashes mark spots which the savages frequented. These, and every circumstance touching the Indian, were important in his eyes. His visits to Maine were chiefly for love of the Indian. He was inquisitive about the making of the stone arrow-head, and in his last days charged a youth setting out for the Rocky Mountains to find an Indian who could tell him that: "It was well worth a visit to California to learn it." Occasionally, a small party of Penobscot Indians would visit Concord, and pitch their tents for a few weeks in summer on the river-bank. He failed not to make acquaintance with the best of them, though he well knew that asking questions of Indians is like catechizing beavers and rabbits. In his last visit to Maine he had great satisfaction from Joseph Polis, an intelligent Indian of Oldtown, who was his guide for some weeks.

He was equally interested in every natural fact. The depth of his perception found likeness of law throughout Nature, and I know not any genius who so swiftly inferred universal law from the single fact. He was no pedant of a department. His eye was open to beauty, and his ear to music. He found these, not in rare conditions, but wheresoever he went. He thought the best of music was in single strains; and he found poetic suggestion in the humming of the telegraph-wire.

His poetry might be bad or good; he no doubt wanted a lyric faculty and technical skill, but he had the source of poetry in his spiritual perception. He was a good reader and critic, and his judgment on poetry was to the ground of it. He could not be deceived as to the presence or absence of the poetic element in any composition, and his thirst for this made him negligent and perhaps scornful of super-



fictitious graces. He would pass by many delicate rhythms, but he would have detected every live stanza or line in a volume, and knew very well where to find an equal poetic charm in prose. He was so enamored of the spiritual beauty that he held all actual written poems in very light esteem in the comparison. He admired Aeschylus and Pindar; but, when some one was commending them, he said that Aeschylus and the Greeks, in describing Apollo and Orpheus, had given no song, or no good one. "They ought not to have moved trees, but to have chanted to the gods such a hymn as would have sung all their old ideas out of their heads, and new ones in." His own verses are often rude and defective. The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy and crude. The thyme and marjoram are not yet honey. But if he want lyric fineness and technical merits, if he have not the poetic temperament, he never lacks the casual thought, showing that his genius was better than his talent. He knew the worth of the Imagination for the uplifting and consolation of human life, and liked to throw every thought into a symbol. The fact you tell is of no value, but only the impression. For this reason his presence was poetic, always piqued the curiosity to know more deeply the secrets of his mind. He had many reserves, an unwillingness to exhibit to profane eyes what was still sacred in his own, and knew well how to throw a poetic veil over his experience. All readers of *Walden* will remember his mythical record of his disappointments:—

"I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turd-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travelers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks, and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud; and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves."

His riddles were worth the reading, and I confide that if at any time I do not understand the expression, it is yet just. Such was the wealth of his truth that it was not worth his while to use words in vain. His poem entitled "Sympathy" reveals the tenderness under that

triple steel of stoicism, and the intellectual subtlety it could animate. His classic poem on "Smoke" suggests Simonides, but is better than any poem of Simonides. His biography is in his verses. His habitual thought makes all his poetry a hymn to the Cause of causes, the Spirit which vivifies and controls his own:—

"I hearing get, who had but ears,  
And sight, who had but eyes before;  
I moments live, who lived but years,  
And truth discern, who knew but learning's  
lore."

And still more in these religious lines.—

"Now chiefly is my natal hour,  
And only now my prime of life; . . .  
I will not doubt the love untold,  
Which not my worth nor want have bought,  
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,  
And to this evening hath me brought."

Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a person of rare, tender, and absolute religion, a person incapable of any profanation, by act or by thought. Of course, the same isolation which belonged to his original thinking and living detached him from the social religious forms. This is neither to be censured nor regretted. Aristotle long ago explained it, when he said, "One who surpasses his fellow-citizens in virtue is no longer a part of the city. Their law is not for him, since he is a law to himself."

Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might fortify the convictions of prophets in the ethical laws by his holy living. It was an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. A truth-speaker he, capable of the most deep and strict conversation; a physician to the wounds of any soul; a friend, knowing not only the secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great heart. He thought that without religion or devotion of some kind nothing great was ever accomplished, and he thought that the bigoted sectarian had better bear this in mind.

His virtues, of course, sometimes ran into extremes. It was easy to trace to the inexorable demand on all for exact truth that austerity

which made this willing hermit more solitary even than he wished. Himself of a perfect probity, he required not less of others. He had a disgust at crime, and no worldly success would cover it. He detected paltering as readily in dignified and prosperous persons as in beggars, and with equal scorn. Such dangerous frankness was in his dealing, that his admirers called him "that terrible Thoreau," as if he spoke when silent, and was still present when he had departed. I think the severity of his ideal interfered to deprive him of a healthy sufficiency of human society.

The habit of a realist to find things the reverse of their appearance inclined him to put every statement in a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings,—a trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later, of substituting for the obvious word and thought its diametrical opposite. He praised wild mountains and winter forests for their domestic air, in snow and ice he would find sultriness, and commended the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris. "It was so dry, that you might call it wet."

The tendency to magnify the moment, to read all the laws of Nature in the one object or one combination under your eye, is of course comic to those who do not share the philosopher's perception of identity. To him there was no such thing as size. The pond was a small ocean, the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond. He referred every minute fact to cosmic laws. Though he meant to be just, he seemed haunted by a certain chronic assumption that the science of the day pretended completeness, and he had just found out that the *savans*<sup>1</sup> had neglected to discriminate a particular botanical variety, had failed to describe the seeds or count the sepals. "That is to say," we replied, "the blockheads were not born in Concord; but who said they were? It was their unspeakable misfortune to be born in London, or Paris, or Rome; but, poor fellows, they did what they could, considering that they never saw Bateman's Pond, or Nine-Acre Corner, or Becky Stow's Swamp; besides, what were you sent into the world for, but to add this observation?"

Had his genius been only contemplative, 50

<sup>1</sup> learned men

he had been fitted to his life, but with his energy and practical ability he seemed born for great enterprise and for command; and I so much regret the loss of his rare powers of action, that I cannot help counting it a fault in him that he had no ambition. Wanting thus, instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry-party. Pounding beans is good to the end of pounding empires one of these days; but if, at the end of years, it is still only beans!

But these foibles, real or apparent, were fast vanishing in the incessant growth of a spirit so robust and wise, and which effaced its defeats with new triumphs. His study of Nature was a perpetual ornament to him, and inspired his friends with curiosity to see the world through his eyes, and to hear his adventures. They possessed every kind of interest.

He had many elegances of his own, whilst he scoffed at conventional elegance. Thus, he could not bear to hear the sound of his own steps, the grit of gravel; and therefore never willingly walked in the road, but in the grass, on mountains and in woods. His senses were acute, and he remarked that by night every dwelling-house gives out bad air, like a slaughter-house. He liked the pure fragrance of melilot.<sup>1</sup> He honored certain plants with special regard, and, over all, the pond-lily,—then the gentian, and the *Mikania scandens*,<sup>2</sup> and "life-everlasting," and a bass-tree which he visited every year when it bloomed, in the middle of July. He thought the scent a more oracular inquisition than the sight,—more oracular and trustworthy. The scent, of course, reveals what is concealed from the other senses. By it he detected earthiness. He delighted in echoes, and said they were almost the only kind of kindred voices that he heard. He loved Nature so well, was so happy in her solitude, that he became very jealous of cities and the sad work which their refinements and artifices made with man and his dwelling. The axe was always destroying his forest. "Thank God," he said, "they cannot cut down the clouds!" "All kinds of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous white paint."

I subjoin a few sentences taken from his

<sup>1</sup> a species of sweet clover    <sup>2</sup> climbing hempweed

unpublished manuscripts, not only as records of his thought and feeling, but for their power of description and literary excellence—

"Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk."

"The chub is a soft fish, and tastes like boiled brown paper salted."

"The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple on the earth, and, at length 10 the middle-aged man concludes to build a woodshed with them."

"The locust z-ing."

"Devil's-needles zigzagging along the Nut-Meadow brook."

"Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound to the healthy ear."

"I put on some hemlock-boughs, and the rich salt crackling of their leaves was like 20 mustard to the ear, the crackling of uncountable regiments. Dead trees love the fire."

"The bluebird carries the sky on his back."

"The tanager flies through the green foliage as if it would ignite the leaves."

"If I wish for a horsehair for my compass-sight I must go to the stable; but the hairbird, with her sharp eyes, goes to the road."

"Immortal water, alive even to the superficies."

"Fire is the most tolerable third party."

"Nature made ferns for pure leaves, to show what she could do in that line."

"No tree has so fair a bole and so handsome an instep as the beech."

"How did these beautiful rainbow-unts get into the shell of the fresh-water clam, buried in the mud at the bottom of our dark river?"

"Hard are the times when the infant's shoes are second-foot."

"We are strictly confined to our men to 40 whom we give liberty."

"Nothing is so much to be feared as fear."

Atheism may comparatively be popular with God himself."

"Of what significance the things you can forget! A little thought is santon to all the world."

"How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not had a seedtime of character?"

"Only he can be trusted with gifts who can present a face of bronze to expectations."

"I ask to be melted. You can only ask of the metals that they be tender to the fire that melts them. To naught else can they be tender."

There is a flower known to botanists, one of the same genus with our summer plant called "Life-Everlasting," a *Gnaphalium* like that which grows on the most inaccessible cliffs of the Tyrolese mountains, where the chamois dare hardly venture, and which the hunter, tempted by its beauty, and by his love (for it is 20 immensely valued by the Swiss maidens), climbs the cliffs to gather, and is sometimes found dead at the foot, with the flower in his hand. It is called by botanists the *Gnaphalium leontopodium*, but by the Swiss *Edelweisse*, which signifies *Noble Purity*. Thoreau seemed to me living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged to him of right. The scale on which his studies proceeded was so large as to require longevity, and we were the less 30 prepared for his sudden disappearance. The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst his broken task which none else can finish, a kind of indignity to so noble a soul that he should depart out of Nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he is. But he, at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest society; he had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world; wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home.

1807 ~ *John Greenleaf Whittier* ~ 1892

WHITTIER'S LIFE and experiences are in strong contrast with those of his more cosmopolitan contemporaries. Whittier knew mainly New England and lived almost as a recluse. He was influenced by the puritan background of his home region, as well as by the Quaker tradition that appeared in Woolman. He was involved deeply in reform, especially in the antislavery movement. His was an austere life of meager opportunities but effective accomplishment. Much of his poetry is autobiographical, born of his own activities and convictions.

Whittier was the descendant of Quaker farmers, and was bred in the Quaker faith. He was born in 1807 in the same house in Haverhill, Massachusetts, that had been built by his American ancestor, Thomas Whittier, in 1688. His early life was that of the typical farm boy—full of hard physical toil for which his frail constitution was ill-suited. His education was confined to a few weeks at a district school during the winters and to two terms at Haverhill Academy. He earned his own expenses at the Academy by shoemaking and by teaching. Only once in his boyhood did he journey so far from his home as Boston. The few books that were available in his household were chiefly almanacs, the lives of Quaker worthies, and the Bible. When he was about fourteen, he came to know Burns, who had a strong influence over him and whose life had some points of resemblance with his own.

Whittier's first printed verses appeared in a local paper edited by William Lloyd Garrison. They brought him to the attention of Garrison, who urged him to complete his education. His short stay at the Haverhill Academy followed in 1827. He spent the next year teaching. But a college education was not possible for him. Perhaps this is not to be regretted, for it might have traditionalized him as it did Longfellow and Lowell. Through the help of Garrison, he was employed as an editor of a Boston trade journal in 1829, but he was forced to return to Haverhill to take charge of the farm because of the illness of his father and his own uncertain health. He was editor of the *Essex Gazette* in 1830, and then of the *New England Review* at Hartford. In 1836 the old farm was sold, and he removed to the village of Amesbury, which became his permanent home.

Through Garrison's influence, Whittier became an abolitionist in the days when the abolitionists were a small and derided band championing an unpopular cause. In 1833 he was a delegate to an antislavery convention in Philadelphia. For the next thirty years he gave his best strength to the cause of the liberation of the slaves. In doing so, he seemed to sacrifice once for all his literary ambitions and his political future. It even changed the character of his writing. His early poems had been

somewhat in the manner of Scott and Byron. His *Legends of New England* (1831) and his long narrative poem, "Moll Pitcher" (1832), indicate to what his tastes might have led him had he not given his strongest efforts to active work for emancipation. He conducted for a short time an abolitionist paper, the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, but he discontinued it when he was threatened by a mob and his office burned as a penalty for his alignment with the abolitionist cause. He wrote much prose in his lifetime, most of it on controversial topics, particularly antislavery propaganda. He was willing to undertake hard political drudgery, for alongside his benevolence and idealism he was endowed with patience, common sense, and practicality. He was a good journalist and rhetorician, and in his protests he made his issues plain in straightforward, conversational language.

At the close of the war he became less the propagandist and more the man of letters. His income was meager indeed until after the publication of *Snow-Bound* (1866), the poem which gave him permanent rank among American poets. He had been able to earn but little by his writing in earlier life and had been forced to practice rigid economy. *Snow-Bound*, however, and his later works brought him large returns.

Whittier found recognition first as the rhyming champion of the abolitionist movement. His antislavery poems, spontaneous and intense, form a large part of his work. These pieces were timely and therefore comparatively transient. They survive mainly for their historic interest. Yet when we read them today, "The Hunters of Men," "Massachusetts to Virginia," and "Ichabod" bring realization of the indignation and the loathing of wrong that stirred Whittier and his contemporaries. His slavery poems make too much, perhaps, of physical suffering, chains, and scourgings, but such emphasis counted in enlisting converts. He owes his lasting place among American poets to the important group of poems in which he writes of nature and simple country life in New England. He had good powers of description and the knack of storytelling, and he is at his best in short and simple ballads. In his later narrative verse he deals chiefly with historic or legendary materials, as in "Barbara Frietchie" or "Skipper Ireson's Ride." He was steeped in his native soil, and much of the bygone life and spirit of New England has been preserved in his work. In *Songs of Labor* (1850) he treats the dignity and independence of labor. Apparently he had past times in mind, however, for such workers as the shoemaker seemed to him like the master craftsmen of old. His outmoded economics did not fit the New England of his day, which had to do not with master craftsmen but with rising capitalism and industrialism. Late in life he wrote religious verse, and he still ranks as our chief religious poet.

Whittier's literary theories, as interpreted by H. H. Clark, evolved through three periods in which he wrote about fifty critical essays and book reviews. Up to 1833 he advocated either romance—fanciful, dreamy, or sensational—or nationalistic

localism, as in his prefaces to *Legends of New England* and to the *Literary Remains of J. G. C. Brainard*. Then, from 1833 to 1858, he aimed to make "his rustic reed of song a weapon in the war with wrong," especially slavery, as in "Proem," "Dedication to Songs of Labor," and "Ego." He admired a friend's poems because "to their intrinsic beauty is added the holier aim of philanthropy." In this period also, as his tribute to Burns indicates, he was coming to see the beauty of "simple truth of fact and feeling." Third, from 1858 on, he developed the view presaged in his essay on "The Beautiful" (1846), according to which beauty is not a matter of romantic escape or nationalistic reform but a spiritual quality of the inward life, a timeless and placeless "beauty of holiness." In "An Artist of the Beautiful," he concludes that "Beauty is goodness, ugliness is sin"; and in "The Tent on the Beach" he came to feel that

"Art no other sanction needs  
Than beauty for its own fair sake."

These three successive ideals are illustrated in "The Demon's Cave," "Massachusetts to Virginia," and "Skipper Ireson's Ride."

Whittier was not a great artist or a finished craftsman. Only the poetry of Bryant and Poe shows the same limitations of range. He restricted himself to few and simple meters. His style is often diffuse, his rhymes careless. His artistic conscience was less strong than his moral; but his work is forceful and intense.

In appearance, Whittier was tall, erect, and slender. His nature is described as gentle, lovable, magnanimous, and kind, and he was genuinely modest about his own work. He never married, perhaps because he lacked the rugged health of his ancestors, or because of his poverty and obligations to his mother and sister, or of the conviction of the Quakers that they should not marry outside their own sect. His seventieth and eightieth birthdays were celebrated by his readers all over the United States. He died at the age of eighty-five, on September 7, 1892, during a visit to New Hampshire.

The standard edition of Whittier's writings is the Riverside, *The Complete Poetical and Prose Works of John Greenleaf Whittier* (7 vols., 1888-1889). The best single-volume edition of his poetry is the Cambridge Edition, edited by Horace E. Scudder (1894). *Whittier Correspondence from the Oak Knoll Collection* was edited by John Albree (1911). F. M. Pray's *A Study of Whittier's Apprenticeship as a Poet* (1930) contains most of his uncollected early poems.

Early lives of Whittier are those by F. H. Underwood (1884), by W. S. Kennedy (1884; revised and enlarged, 1892), and by G. W. Linton in *Great Writers Series* (1893). Others are by Richard Burton in the *Beacon Biographies* (1901), T. W. Higginson in *English Men of Letters Series* (1902); and G. R. Carpenter in *American Men of Letters Series* (1903). The most extended life, still the standard one, is that by S. T. Pickard, *The Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier* (2 vols., 1894; revised ed., 1907). Later biographies are G. K. Lewis's *J. G. Whittier, His Life and Work* (1913), and A. Mordell's *Quaker Militant: John Greenleaf Whittier* (1933). The latter is too Freudian to be wholly dependable.

Among critical articles and works may be mentioned those by the following authors: Barrett Wendell, in *Stelligers and Other Essays* (1893); J. V. Cheney, in *That Dome in Air* (1895); G. E. Woodberry, in *Makers of Literature* (1900); C. J. Hawkins, *The Mind of Whittier* (1904); P. E. More, in *Shelburne Essays*, Third Series (1907); Bliss Perry, in *Park Street Papers* (1908); John Macy, in *The Spirit of American Literature* (1913); I. K. Eastburn, *Whittier's Relation to German Life and Thought* (1915); W. M. Payne, in *CHAL*, II (1918); E. J. Bailey, in *Religious Thought in the Greater American Poets* (1922); N. Foerster, in *Nature in American Literature* (1923); V. L. Parrington, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, II (1927); Alfred Kreyenborg, in *Our Singing Strength* (1929); J. S. Stevens, *Whittier's Use of the Bible* (1930); A. Christy, "Orientalism in New England," *American Literature* (Jan., 1930), and "The Orientalism of Whittier" (Nov., 1933); R. Brenner, in *Twelve American Poets before 1900* (1933); A. T. Murray, *Religious Poems by J. G. Whittier* (1934); G. W. Allen, in *American Prosody* (1935).

For bibliography, see T. F. Currier, *Bibliography of John Greenleaf Whittier* (1937); F. H. Rustine, in *CHAL*, II (1918), and Harry Hartwick, in W. F. Taylor's *A History of American Letters* (1935).

### THE EXILE'S DEPARTURE

Whittier's first poem. Published, June 9, 1826, in Garrison's *Newburyport Free Press*. It shows the influence of Thomas Moore, author of *Irish Melodies*. Whittier early liked romantic European themes, local settings, and the "Gothic" or word supernatural. Then his interest shifted to themes of political and social reform, and still later to religious themes. Over a hundred of his early pieces have been printed by Frances M. Pray, *A Study of Whittier's Apprenticeship* (1930). Many show the influence of Scott and Byron.

FOND scenes which delighted my youthful  
existence,

With feelings of sorrow I bid ye adieu—  
A lasting adieu for now, dim in the distance,  
The shores of Hibernia recede from my  
view.

Farewell to the cliffs, tempest-beaten and  
gray,

Which guard the lov'd shores of my own  
native land,  
Farewell to the village and sail-shadow'd bay,  
The forest-crown'd hill and water-wash'd  
strand.

I've fought for my country—I've brav'd all  
the dangers

That throng round the path of the warrior  
in strife,

I now must depart to a nation of strangers,  
And pass in seclusion the remnant of life.  
Far, far from the friends to my bosom most  
dear

With none to support me in peril and pain,  
And none but the stranger to drop the sad  
tear

On the grave where the heart-broken Exile  
is laid.

Friends of my youth! I must leave you forever,  
And hasten to dwell in a region unknown—  
Yet time cannot change, nor the broad ocean  
sever,

Hearts firmly united and tried as our  
own.

Ah! not though I wander, all sad and forlorn,  
In a far distant land, yet shall memory  
trace,

When far o'er the ocean's white surges I'm  
borne,

The scene of past pleasures,—my own  
native place.

Farewell, shores of Erin, green land of my  
fathers—

Once more, and forever, a mournful adieu!  
For round thy dim headlands the ocean must  
gather,

And shrouds the fair isle I no longer can  
view.

I go—but wherever my footsteps I bend,  
For freedom and peace to my own native  
isle,

And contentment and joy to each warm-  
hearted friend

Shall be the heart's prayer of the lonely  
Exile.

## TO WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

Read at an antislavery convention at Philadelphia, December, 1833. Whittier wrote an essay on Garrison in 1879 (*Works*, VII, 189-192) "My acquaintance with him," he said, "commenced in boyhood. My father was a subscriber to his first paper, the *Free Press*, and the humanitarian tone of his editorials awakened a deep interest in our little household, which was increased by a visit that he made us. When he afterwards edited the *Journal of the Times*, at Bennington, Vermont, I ventured to write him a letter of encouragement and sympathy, urging him to continue his labors against slavery, and assuring him that he could 'do great things,' an unconscious prophecy which has been fulfilled beyond the dream of my boyish enthusiasm. The friendship thus commenced has remained unbroken through half a century, confirming my early confidence in his zeal and devotion, and in the great intellectual and moral strength which he brought to the cause with which his name is identified."

CHAMPION of those who groan beneath  
Oppression's iron hand.

In view of penury, hate, and death,  
I see thee fearless stand.  
Still bearing up thy lofty brow,  
In the steadfast strength of truth,  
In manhood sealing well the vow  
And promise of thy youth

Go on, for thou hast chosen well,  
On in the strength of God! 10  
Long as one human heart shall swell  
Beneath the tyrant's rod  
Speak in a slumbering nation's ear,  
As thou hast ever spoken,  
Until the dead in sin shall hear,  
The fetter's link be broken!

I love thee with a brother's love,  
I feel my pulses thrill,  
To mark thy spirit soar above  
The cloud of human ill 20  
My heart hath leaped to answer thine,  
And echo back thy words,  
As leaps the warrior's at the shine  
And flash of kindred swords!

They tell me thou art rash and vain,  
A searcher after fame;  
That thou art striving but to gain  
A long-enduring name;

That thou hast nerved the Afric's hand  
And steeled the Afric's heart, 30  
To shake aloft his vengeful brand,  
And rend his chain apart.

Have I not known thee well, and read  
Thy mighty purpose long?  
And watched the trials which have made  
Thy human spirit strong?  
And shall the slanderer's demon breath  
Aval with one like me,  
To dim the sunshine of my faith  
And earnest trust in thee? 40

Go on, the dagger's point may glare  
Amid thy pathway's gloom,  
The fate which sternly threatens there  
Is glorious martyrdom!  
Then onward with a martyr's zeal,  
And wait thy sure reward  
When man to man no more shall kneel,  
And God alone be Lord!

1832

## MEMORIES

According to Pickard (*Life*, I, 276), "It was not without thought and deliberation that in 1888 he directed this poem to be placed at the head of his *Poems Subjective and Reminiscent*. He had never before publicly acknowledged how much of his heart was wrapped up in this delightful play of poetic fancy. To a friend who told him that *Memories* was her favorite poem, he said 'I love it too, but I hardly knew whether to publish it, it was so personal and so near my heart.'" Among the qualities for which he praises its heroine are timidity (line 30) and artlessness (line 40). In lines 55-63 he refers to his Quakerism. Albert Mordell says that the girl of the poem was Mary Emerson Smith, a distant relative of the poet (*Quaker Melodist*, 39-53).

A BRAUTIFUL and happy girl,  
With step as light as summer air,  
Eyes glad with smiles, and brow of pearl,  
Shadowed by many a careless curl  
Of unconfined and flowing hair;  
A seeming child in everything,  
Save thoughtful brow and ripening  
charms,  
As Nature wears the smile of Spring  
When sinking into Summer's arms.



A mind rejoicing in the light 10  
Which melted through its graceful bower,  
Leaf after leaf, dew-moist and bright,  
And stainless in its holy white,  
Unfolding like a morning flower:  
A heart, which, like a fine-toned lute,  
With every breath of feeling woke,  
And, even when the tongue was mute,  
From eye and lip in music spoke.

How thrills once more the lengthening chain  
Of memory, at the thought of thee! 20  
Old hopes which long in dust have lain,  
Old dreams, come thronging back again,  
And boyhood lives again in me,  
I feel its glow upon my cheek,  
Its fulness of the heart is mine,  
As when I leaned to hear thee speak,  
Or raised my doubtful eye to thine

I hear again thy low replies,  
I feel thy arm within my own,  
And timidly again uprise 30  
The fringed lids of hazel eyes,  
With soft brown tresses overblown.  
All memories of sweet summer eves,  
Of moonlit wave and willowy way,  
Of stars and flowers, and dewy leaves,  
And smiles and tones more dear than  
they!

Ere thus, thy quiet eye hath smiled  
My picture of thy youth to see,  
When, half a woman, half a child,  
Thy very artlessness beguiled, 40  
And folly's self seemed wise in thee;  
I too can smile, when o'er that hour  
The lights of memory backward stream,  
Yet feel the while that manhood's power  
Is vainer than my boyhood's dream.

Years have passed on, and left their trace  
Of graver care and deeper thought;  
And unto me the calm, cold face  
Of manhood, and to thee the grace  
Of woman's pensive beauty brought. 50  
More wide, perchance, for blame than praise,  
The schoolboy's humble name has flown;  
Thine, in the green and quiet ways  
Of unobtrusive goodness known.

And wider yet in thought and deed...  
Diverge our pathways, one in youth;  
Thine the Genevan's<sup>1</sup> sternest creed,  
While answers to my spirit's need  
The Derby dalesman's simple truth.  
For thee, the priestly rite and prayer, 60  
And holy day, and solemn psalm;  
For me, the silent reverence where  
My brethren gather, slow and calm.

Yet hath thy spirit left on me  
An impress Time has worn not out,  
And something of myself in thee,  
A shadow from the past, I see,  
Lingering, even yet, thy way about;  
Not wholly can the heart unlearn  
That lesson of its better hours, 70  
Nor yet has Time's dull footstep worn  
To common dust that path of flowers.

Thus, while at times before our eyes  
The shadows melt, and fall apart,  
And, smiling through them, round us lies  
The warm light of our morning skies,—  
The Indian Summer of the heart!—  
In secret sympathies of mind,  
In founts of feeling which retain  
Their pure, fresh flow, we yet may find 80  
Our early dreams not wholly vain!

1841

1843, 1850

## MASSACHUSETTS TO VIRGINIA

Written on reading an account of the proceedings of the citizens of Norfolk, Va., in reference to George Latimer, the alleged fugitive slave, who was seized in Boston without warrant at the request of James B. Grey, of Norfolk, claiming to be his master. The case caused great excitement North and South, and led to the presentation of a petition to Congress, signed by more than fifty thousand citizens of Massachusetts, calling for such laws and proposed amendments to the Constitution as should relieve the Commonwealth from all further participation in the crime of oppression. George Latimer himself was finally given free papers for the sum of four hundred dollars. [Whittier's note]

<sup>1</sup> The Genevan was John Calvin, the Protestant theologian and reformer of the sixteenth century, who lived in Geneva. The "Derby dalesman" (line 39) refers to George Fox, who founded the Society of Friends of which Whittier was a member.

THE Mast from Freedom's Northern hills,  
upon its Southern way,  
Bears greeting to Virginia from Massachusetts  
Bay;  
No word of haughty challenging, nor battle  
bugle's peal,  
Nor steady tread of marching files, nor clang  
of horsemen's steel.

No trains of deep-mouthed cannon along our  
highways go;  
Around our silent arsenals untrodden lies the  
snow;  
And to the land-breeze of our ports, upon  
their errands far,  
A thousand sails of commerce swell, but none  
are spread for war.

We hear thy threats, Virginal thy stormy  
words and high  
Swell harshly on the Southern winds which  
melt along our sky;  
Yet, not one brown, hard hand foregoes its  
honest labor here,  
No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his  
axe in fear

Wild are the waves which lash the reefs along  
St. George's bank;  
Cold on the shores of Labrador the fog lies  
white and dank,  
Through storm, and wave, and blinding mist,  
stout are the hearts which man  
The fishing-smacks of Marblehead, the sea-  
coasts of Cape Ann.

The cold north light and wintry sun glare on  
their icy forms,  
Bent grimly 'o'er their straining lines or  
wrestling with the storms,  
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as  
the waves they roam,  
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against  
their rocky home

What means the Old Dominion? Hath she  
forgot the day  
When o'er her conquered valleys swept the  
Briton's steel array?  
How side by side, with sons of hers, the  
Massachusetts men  
Encountered Tarleton's charge of fire, and  
stout Cornwallis, then?

Forgets she how the Bay State, in answer to  
the call  
Of her old House of Burgesses, spoke out  
from Faneuil Hall?  
When, echoing back her Henry's cry, came  
pulsing in each breath  
Of Northern winds the thrilling sounds of  
"Liberty or Death!"<sup>1</sup>

What asks the Old Dominion? If now her  
sons have proved  
False to their fathers' memory, false to the  
faith they loved,  
If she can scoff at Freedom, and its great  
charter<sup>2</sup> spurn,  
Must we of Massachusetts from truth and  
duty turn?

We hunt your bondmen, flying from Slavery's  
hateful hell;  
Our voices, at your bidding, take up the  
bloodhound's yell,  
We gather, at your summons, above our  
fathers' graves,  
From Freedom's holy altar-horns<sup>3</sup> to tear your  
wretched slaves!

Thank God! not yet so vilely can Massa-  
chusetts bow,  
The spirit of her early time is with her even  
now,  
Dream not because her Pilgrim blood moves  
slow and calm and cool,  
She thus can stoop her chainless neck, a  
sister's slave and tool

All that a sister State should do, all that a free  
State may,  
Heart, hand, and purse we proffer, as in our  
early day;  
But that one dark loathsome burden ye must  
stagger with alone,  
And reap the bitter harvest which ye your-  
selves have sown!

<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts followed Virginia by adopting resolutions of Virginia legislators in 1769 and 1774. Faneuil Hall in Boston, became conspicuous for its association with patriotic meetings of the century. Patrick Henry's noted speech was delivered in March, 1775. <sup>2</sup> the Declaration of Independence <sup>3</sup> I Kings 1: 50

Hold, while ye may, your struggling slaves,  
and burden God's free air  
With woman's shriek beneath the lash, and  
manhood's wild despair,  
Cling closer to the "cleaving curse"<sup>1</sup> that  
writes upon your plains  
The blasting of Almighty wrath against a  
land of chains.

Still shame your gallant ancestry, the cavaliers  
of old,  
By watching round the shambles where  
human flesh is sold; 50  
Gloat o'er the newborn child, and count his  
market value, when  
The maddened mother's cry of woe shall  
pierce the slaver's den!

Lower than plummet soundeth, sink the Vir-  
ginia name;  
Plant, if ye will, your fathers' graves with  
ranked weeds of shame,  
Be, if ye will, the scandal of God's fair uni-  
verse;  
We wash our hands forever of your sin and  
shame and curse

A voice from lips whereon the coal from  
Freedom's shrine hath been,  
Thrilled, as but yesterday, the hearts of  
Berkshire's<sup>2</sup> mountain men.  
The echoes of that solemn voice are sadly  
lingering still  
In all our sunny valleys, on every wind-swept  
hill. 60

And when the prowling man-thief came hunt-  
ing for his prey  
Beneath the very shadow of Bunker's shaft  
of gray,  
How, through the free lips of the son, the  
father's warning spoke,  
How, from its bonds of trade and sect, the  
Pilgrim city broke!

A hundred thousand right arms were lifted  
up on high,  
A hundred thousand voices sent back their  
loud reply;

Through the thronged towns of Essex the  
startling summons rang,  
And up from bench and loom and wheel her  
young mechanics sprang!

The voice of free, broad Middlesex, of thou-  
sands as of one,  
The shaft of Bunker calling to that of Lexing-  
ton; 70  
From Norfolk's ancient villages, from Plym-  
outh's rocky bound  
To where Nantucket feels the arms of ocean  
close her round;

From rich and rural Worcester, where through  
the calm repose  
Of cultured vales and fringing woods the  
gentle Nashua flows,  
To where Wachusett's wintry blasts the moun-  
tain larches stir,  
Swelled up to Heaven the thrilling cry of  
"God save Latimer!"

And sandy Barnstable rose up, wet with the  
salt sea spray,  
And Bristol sent her answering shout down  
Narragansett Bay!  
Along the broad Connecticut old Hampden  
felt the thrill,  
And the cheer of Hampshire's woodmen  
swept down from Holyoke Hill 80

The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons  
and daughters,  
Deep calling unto deep aloud, the sound of  
many waters!  
Against the burden of that voice what tyrant  
power shall stand?  
No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her  
land!

Look to it well, Virginians! In calmness we  
have borne,  
In answer to our faith and trust, your insult  
and your scorn;  
You've spurned our kindest counsels, you've  
hunted for our lives,  
And shaken round our hearths and homes  
your manacles and gyves!

We wage no war, we lift no arm, we fling no  
torch within  
The fire-damps of the quaking mine beneath  
your soil of sin; 90

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 4:11-12    <sup>2</sup> Here and in the five stanzas  
that follow eleven of the fourteen counties in Massa-  
chusetts are specifically mentioned.

We leave ye with your bondmen, to wrestle,  
while ye can,  
With the strong upward tendencies and god-  
like soul of man!

But for us and for our children, the vow which  
we have given

For freedom and humanity is registered in  
heaven;

No slave-hunt in our borders,—no pirate on  
our strand!

No fetters in the Bay State,—no slave upon  
our land!

1843

## PROEM

Introduction to his first volume of collected  
poems (1849) Of interest is the validity of Whit-  
tier's view of his own poetry He admires Sidney,  
Spenser, Marvell, and Milton, and recognizes his  
own limitations in craftsmanship and profundity  
of insight His ambition is to be the poet of Free-  
dom His moral sense and social idealism are  
stronger than his artistic endowments

I LOVE the old melodious lays  
Which softly melt the ages through,  
The songs of Spenser's golden days,  
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,  
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest  
morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours  
To breathe their marvelous notes I try;  
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers  
In silence feel the dewy showers,  
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of  
the sky. 10

The rigor of a frozen clime,  
The harshness of an untaught ear,  
The jarring words of one whose rime  
Beat often Labor's hurried time,  
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and  
strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,  
No rounded art the lack supplies;  
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,  
Or softer shades of Nature's face,  
I view her common forms with unanointed  
eyes. 20

Nor mine the seer-like power to show  
The secrets of the heart and mind;  
To drop the plummet-line below  
Our common world of joy and woe,  
A more intense despair or brighter hope to  
find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense  
Of human right and weal is shown;  
A hate of tyranny intense,  
And hearty in its vehemence,  
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my  
own. 30

O Freedom! if to me belong  
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,  
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,  
Sull with a love as deep and strong  
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on  
thy shrine!

1847

1849

## From SONGS OF LABOR

## Dedication

This dedication should be read in connection  
with "Proem" for the light it throws on Whittier's  
poetic ideals He knows his deficiencies as an artist  
The value of his "simple lays of homely toil" lies  
in his sympathy with labor, his zeal against in-  
justice, and his manly performance of duty

I WOULD the gift I offer here  
Might grace from thy favor take,  
And, seen through Friendship's atmos-  
phere,  
On softened lines and coloring, wear  
The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy  
sake.

Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain.  
But what I have I give to thee,  
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,  
And paler flowers, the latter rain  
Calls from the westering slope of life's  
autumnal lea. 10

Above the fallen groves of green,  
Where youth's enchanted fountain stood,  
Dry root and mossed trunk between,  
A sober aftergrowth is seen,  
As springs the pine where falls the gay-leaved  
maple wood.

Yet birds will sing, and breezes play  
 Their leaf-harps in the somber tree;  
 And through the bleak and wintry day  
 It keeps its steady green away.—  
 So, even my afterthoughts may have a  
 charm for thee. 20

Art's perfect forms no moral need,  
 And beauty is its own excuse;  
 But for the dull and flowerless weed  
 Some healing virtue still must plead,  
 And the rough ore must find its honors in its  
 use.

So haply these, my simple lays  
 Of homely toil, may serve to show  
 The orchard bloom and tasselled maize  
 That skirt and gladden duty's ways,  
 The unsung beauty hid life's common things  
 below. 30

Haply from them the toiler, bent  
 Above his forge or plow may gain  
 A manlier spirit of content,  
 And feel that life is wisest spent  
 Where the strong working hand makes strong  
 the working brain.

The doom which to the guilty pair  
 Without the walls of Eden came,  
 Transforming sinless ease to care  
 And rugged toil, no more shall bear  
 The burden of old crime, or mark of primal  
 shame. 40

A blessing now, a curse no more;  
 Since He, whose name we breathe with  
 awe,  
 The coarse mechanic vesture wore,  
 A poor man toiling with the poor,  
 In labor as in prayer, fulfilling the same law. 1850

### *The Shoemakers*

This poem has especial interest from Whittier's early experience in shoemaking. Factories were beginning to produce shoes in vast quantities in Whittier's day, but he is conscious, in his poem, rather of the master craftsmen of medieval times than of rising industrialism.

Hol workers of the old time styled  
 The Gentle Craft of Leather!  
 Young brothers of the ancient guild,  
 Stand forth once more together!  
 Call out again your long array,  
 In the olden merry manner!  
 Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,<sup>1</sup>  
 Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone  
 How falls the polished hammer! 10  
 Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown  
 A quick and merry clamor  
 Now shape the sole! now deftly curl  
 The glossy vamp around it,  
 And bless the while the bright-eyed girl  
 Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you, along the Spanish main  
 A hundred keels are ploughing;  
 For you, the Indian<sup>2</sup> on the plain  
 His lasso-coil is throwing, 20  
 For you, deep glens with hemlock dark  
 The woodman's fire is lighning,  
 For you, upon the oak's gray bark,  
 The woodman's axe is smiting

For you, from Carolina's pine  
 The rosin-gum is stealing;  
 For you, the dark-eyed Florentine  
 Her silken skein is reeling,  
 For you, the dizzy goatherd roams  
 His rugged Alpine ledges, 30  
 For you, round all her shepherd homes,  
 Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,  
 On moated mound or heather,  
 Where'er the need of trampled right  
 Brought toiling men together,  
 Where the free burghers from the wall  
 Defied the mail-clad master,  
 Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,  
 No craftsman rallied faster. 40

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,  
 Ye heed no idle scorne;  
 Free hands and hearts are still your pride,  
 And duty done your honor

<sup>1</sup> October 25, commemorating the martyrdom, in the third century, of Crispin, a shoemaker. <sup>2</sup> a reference to the Indian cowboys of the pampas in Argentina, which was the chief source of cowhides at the time Whittier was writing

Ye dare to trust; for honest fame,  
The jury Time empanels,  
And leave to truth each noble name  
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sacha, are living yet,  
In strong and hearty German;  
And Bloomfield's lay, and Gifford's wit,  
And patriot fame of Sherman;  
Still from his book, a mystic seer,  
The soul of Belmen teaches,  
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear  
Of Fox's leathern breeches.

The foot is yours; where'er it falls,  
It treads your well-wrought leather,  
On earthen floor, in marble halls,  
On carpet, or on heather.  
Still there the sweetest charm is found  
Of matron grace or vestal's,  
As Hebe's<sup>1</sup> foot bore nectar round  
Among the old celestials!

Rap, rap!—your stout and bluff brogan,  
With footsteps slow and weary,  
May wander where the sky's blue span  
Shuts down upon the prairie.  
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,  
By Saratoga's fountains,<sup>2</sup>  
Or twinkle down the summer dance  
Beneath the Crystal Mountains!

The red brick to the mason's hand,  
The brown earth to the tiller's,<sup>3</sup>  
The shoe in yours shall wealth command,  
Like fairy Cinderella's!

As they who shunned the household maid  
Beheld the crown upon her,  
So all shall see your toil repaid  
With hearth and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,  
In water cool and brimming,—  
"All honor to the good old Graft,  
Its merry men and women!"

Call out again your long array,  
In the old time's pleasant manner.  
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,  
Fling out his blazoned banner!

1845

1850

<sup>1</sup> cupbearer of the gods in Greek mythology  
<sup>2</sup> Saratoga Springs, popular summer resort in the nineteenth century    <sup>3</sup> lines 74 and 76, 82 and 84, instances of the faulty rhymes into which Whittier often lapses

### *The Huskers*

There is no reversion here to the past, as in the preceding lyric Whittier is at his best when preserving in poetic form the details of the New England farm life that he knew.

It was late in mild October, and the long  
autumnal rain  
Had left the summer harvest-fields all green  
with grass again;  
The first sharp frost had fallen, leaving all  
the woodlands gay  
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the  
meadow-flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the  
sun rose broad and red,  
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as  
he sped:  
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened  
and subdued,  
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly  
pictured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to  
the night,  
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with  
yellow light,  
Slanting through the painted beeches, he  
glorified the hill;  
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay  
brighter, greener still.

And shouting boys in woodland haunts  
caught glimpses of that sky,  
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and  
laughed, they knew not why,  
And schoolgirls gay with aster-flowers, be-  
side the meadow brooks,  
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sun-  
shine of sweet looks.

From spire and barn looked westerly the  
patient weathercocks;  
But even the birches on the hill stood mo-  
tionless as rocks.

No sound was in the woodlands, save the  
squirrel's dropping shell,  
And the yellow leaves among the boughs,  
low rustling as they fell.

20

The summer grains were harvested; the stubble-fields lay dry,  
Where June winds rolled, in light and shade,  
the pale green waves of rye;  
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed with wood,  
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn crop stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks that, dry and sere,  
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the yellow ear;  
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant fold,  
And glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's sphere of gold.

There wrought the busy harvesters, and many a creaking wain  
Bore slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and grain;  
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,  
And like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed

And lo! as through the western pines, on meadow, stream, and pond,  
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,  
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory shone,  
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into one!

As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away,  
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil shadows lay,  
From many a brown old farmhouse, and hamlet without name,  
Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merry huskers came.

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks in the mow,  
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scene below;  
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ears before,  
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown cheeks glimmering o'er.

Half-hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look and heart,  
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart;  
While up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling in its shade,  
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young and fair,  
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of soft brown hair,  
The master of the village school, sleek of hair and smooth of tongue,  
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-ballad sung.

## THE CORN-SONG

Heap high the farmer's wintry hoard!  
Heap high the golden corn!  
No richer gift has Autumn poured  
From out her lavish horn!

Let other lands, exulting, glean  
The apple from the pine,  
The orange from its glossy green,  
The cluster from the vine,

We better love the hardy gift  
Our rugged vales bestow,  
To cheer us when the storm shall drift  
Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers  
Our plows their furrows made,  
While on the hills the sun and showers  
Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain  
Beneath the sun of May,  
And frightened from our sprouting grain  
The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June  
Its leaves grew green and fair,  
And waved in hot midsummer's noon  
Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with Autumn's moonlit eyes,  
Its harvest-time has come,  
We pluck away the frosted leaves,  
And bear the treasure home.

There, when the snows about us drift,  
And winter winds are cold, 30  
Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,  
And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk  
Around their costly board;  
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,  
By homespun beauty poured!

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth  
Sends up its smoky curls,  
Who will not thank the kindly earth,  
And bless our farmer girls! 40

Then shame on all the proud and vain,  
Whose folly laughs to scorn  
The blessing of our hardy grain,  
Our wealth of golden corn!

Let earth withhold her goodly root,  
Let mildew blight the rye,  
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit  
The wheat-field to the fly:

But let the good old crop adorn  
The hills our fathers trod, 50  
Still let us, for His golden corn,  
Send up our thanks to God!

1847

1850

### ICHABOD!<sup>1</sup>

First published in the *National Era*, May 3, 1850. Later in his collected edition Whittier grouped it among "Personal Poems" and explained its writing in these words:

"This poem was the outcome of the surprise and grief and forecast of evil consequences which I felt on reading the seventh of March speech of Daniel Webster in support of the 'compromise' and the Fugitive Slave Bill. No partisan or personal enmity dictated it. On the contrary my admiration of the splendid personality and intellectual power of the great senator was never stronger than when I laid down his speech, and, in one of the saddest moments of my life, penned my protest. I saw, as I wrote, with painful clearness its sure results,—the Slave Power arrogant and defiant, strengthened and encouraged to carry out its scheme for the extension of its baleful system, or the dissolution of the Union, the guarantees of personal liberty in the free States broken down,

<sup>1</sup> See I Samuel 4: 21

and the whole country made the hunting-ground of slave-catchers. In the horror of such a vision, so soon fearfully fulfilled, if one spoke at all, he could speak only in tones of stern and sorrowful rebuke."

Whittier was roused to a white heat of lyric wrath and scorn when he wrote this poem. Webster, who thought it wisest to try to save the Union by a compromise, has been somewhat exonerated by later historians. Many years after writing "Ichabod," Whittier returned to the same subject in "The Lost Occasion" (see page 735), but the severity of his condemnation had now been tempered by the "consciousness of a common inheritance of frailty and weakness." He expressed regret that Webster had not lived until the great climax of the struggle over slavery, thinking that he might then have "made his last days glorious in defence of 'Liberty and Union, one and inseparable.'"

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn  
Which once he wore!  
The glory from his gray hairs gone  
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath  
A snare for all;  
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,  
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,  
When he who might 10  
Have lighted up and led his age,  
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark  
A bright soul driven,  
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,  
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him  
Insult him now,  
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,  
Dishonored brow. 20

But let its humbled sons, instead,  
From sea to lake,  
A long lament, as for the dead,  
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught  
Save power remains,—  
A fallen angel's pride of thought,  
Still strong in chains.



All else is gone; from those great eyes  
 The soul has fled:  
 When faith is lost, when honor dies,  
 The man is dead!

90

Then, pay the reverence of old days  
 To his dead fame;  
 Walk backward, with averted gaze,  
 And hide the shame!

1850

### THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS

This poem was written in the year that the  
 Kansas-Nebraska Bill was passed

We cross the prairie as of old  
 The Pilgrims crossed the sea,  
 To make the West, as they the East,  
 The homestead of the free

We go to rear a wall of men  
 On Freedom's southern line,  
 And plant beside the cotton-tree  
 The rugged Northern pine!

We're flowing from our native hills  
 As our free rivers flow  
 The blessing of our Mother-land  
 Is on us as we go.

10

We go to plant her common schools  
 On distant prairie swells,  
 And give the Sabbaths of the wild  
 The music of her bells

Upbearing, like the Ark of old,  
 The Bible in our van,  
 We go to test the truth of God  
 Against the fraud of man.

20

No pause, nor rest, save where the streams  
 That feed the Kansas run,  
 Save where our Pilgrim gonfalon  
 Shall flout the setting sun!

We'll tread the prairie as of old  
 Our fathers sailed the sea,  
 And make the West, as they the East,  
 The homestead of the free!

1854

### BURNS

#### ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER, IN BLOSSOM

For awaking a lasting interest in Burns's poetry, Whittier gives credit to his first schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, who brought to the Whittier home a volume of Burns's poems, from which he read, greatly to the delight of the boy of fourteen "I begged him to leave the book with me, and set myself at once to the task of mastering the glossary of the Scotch dialect at the close. This was about the first poetry I had ever read (with the exception of that of the Bible, of which I had been a close student), and it had a lasting influence upon me. I began to make rhymes myself, and to imagine stories and adventures." In "Yankee Gypsies" (*Prose Works*, I, 336-37), Whittier says that he owed his introduction to Burns's songs to a wandering old Scotchman with a rich full voice who sang "Bonny Doon," "Highland Mary," and "Auld Lang Syne," after eating bread and cheese and drinking cider in the old farmhouse kitchen

No more these simple flowers belong  
 To Scottish maid and lover,  
 Sown in the common soil of song,  
 They bloom the wide world over

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,  
 The minstrel and the heather,  
 The deathless singer and the flowers  
 He sang of live together

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!  
 The moorland flower and peasant!  
 How, at their mention, memory turns  
 Her pages old and pleasant!

10

The gray sky wears again its gold  
 And purple of adorning,  
 And manhood's noonday shadows hold  
 The dews of boyhood's morning

The dews that washed the dust and soil  
 From off the wings of pleasure,  
 The sky, that flecked the ground of toil  
 With golden threads of leisure.

20

I call to mind the summer day,  
 The early harvest mowing,  
 The sky with sun and clouds at play,  
 And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,  
The locust in the haying;  
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,  
Old tunes my heart is playing

How oft that day, with fond delay,  
I sought the maple's shadow,  
And sang with Burns the hours away,  
Forgetful of the meadow!

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead  
I heard the squirrels leaping,  
The good dog listened while I read,  
And wagged his tail in keeping

I watched him while in sportive mood  
I read "The Two Dogs'" story,  
And half believed he understood  
The poet's allegory

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours  
Grew brighter for that singing,  
From brook and bird and meadow flowers  
A dearer welcome bringing

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,  
New glory over Woman,  
And daily life and duty seemed  
No longer poor and common

I woke to find the simple truth  
Of fact and feeling better  
Than all the dreams that held my youth  
A still repining debtor

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,  
The themes of sweet discoursing;  
The tender idyls of the heart  
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,  
Of loving knight and lady,  
When farmer boy and barefoot girl  
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things  
The romance underlying,  
The joys and griefs that plume the wings  
Of Fancy skyward flying

I saw the same blithe day return,  
The same sweet fall of even,  
That rose on wooded Craige-burn,  
And sank on crystal Devon.

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills  
The sweetbrier and the clover;  
With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,  
Their wood hymns chanting over.

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,  
I saw the Man uprising,  
No longer common or unclean,  
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth  
Of life among the lowly;  
The Bible at his Cotter's hearth<sup>1</sup>  
Had made my own more holy

And if at times an evil strain,  
To lawless love appealing,  
Broke in upon the sweet refrain  
Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,  
No inward answer gaining,  
No heart had I to see or hear  
The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget  
His worth, in vain bewailings;  
Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt  
Uncanceled by his failings!

Lament who will the ribald line  
Which tells his lapse from duty,  
How kissed the maddening lips of wine  
Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between  
The erring one and Heaven,  
That he who loved like Magdalen,<sup>2</sup>  
Like her may be forgiven.

Not his the song whose thunderous chime  
Eternal echoes render,  
The mournful Tuscan's<sup>3</sup> haunted rhyme,  
And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid  
To Nature's bosom nearer?  
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid  
To love a tribute dearer?

<sup>1</sup> stanzas 14-15 of Burns's "The Cotter's Saturday Night"    <sup>2</sup> Luke 7:37-38    <sup>3</sup> Dante

Through all his tuneful art, how strong  
 The human feeling gushes! 110  
 The very moonlight of his song  
 Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Gave lettered pomp to teeth of Time,  
 So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry,  
 Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,  
 But spare his "Highland Mary"! 1854

### MAUD MULLER

Whittier once said that the suggestion for this poem might have come from an incident in a journey with his sister along the Maine sea-board. They saw a beautiful young girl at work in a hayfield, who blushed as they talked with her and tried to cover her bare feet by raking hay over them.

MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day,  
 Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth  
 Of simple beauty and rustic health

Singing she wrought, and her merry glee  
 The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,  
 White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest 9  
 And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish, that she hardly dared to own,  
 For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,  
 Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade  
 Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that  
 flowed

Through the meadow across the road

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled  
 up,  
 And filled for him her small tin cup, 20

And blushed as she gave it, looking down  
 On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught  
 From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,  
 Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered  
 whether  
 The cloud in the west would bring foul  
 weather

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,  
 And her graceful ankles bare and brown, 30

And listened, while a pleased surprise  
 Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay  
 Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away

Maud Muller looked and sighed "Ah me!  
 That I the Judge's bride might be!"

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,  
 And praise and toast me at his wine

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat,  
 My brother should sail a painted boat 40

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,  
 And the baby should have a new toy each  
 day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,  
 And all should bless me who left our door "

The Judge looked back as he climbed the  
 hill,  
 And saw Maud Muller standing still

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,  
 Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air  
 Show her wise and good as she is fair. 50

"Would she were mine, and I, to-day,  
 Like her, a harvester of hay

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,  
 Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,  
 And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters proud and cold,  
 And his mother vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,  
And Maud was left in the field alone. 60

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,  
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well  
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,  
Who lived for fashion, as he for power

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,  
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes  
Looked out in their innocent surprise 70

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,  
He longed for the wayside well instead

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms  
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms

And the proud man sighed, with a secret  
pain,  
"Ah, that I were free again!"

"Free as when I rode that day,  
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay"

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,  
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain, 81  
Left their traces on heart and brain

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot  
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall  
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again  
She saw a rider draw his rein

And, gazing down with timid grace,  
She felt his pleased eyes read her face. 90

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls  
Stretched away into stately halls,

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,  
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,<sup>1</sup>  
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,  
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,  
Saying only, "It might have been." 100

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,  
For rich repiner and household drudgel

God pity them both! and pity us all,  
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"<sup>2</sup>

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies  
Deeply buried from human eyes,

And, in the hereafter, angels may  
Roll the stone from its grave away! 110

1854

### THE BAREFOOT BOY

This poem of a happy rural childhood is probably in part autobiographical. The number, variety, and accuracy of the details of landscape, those of Whittier's own region, should be noted

BLESSINGS on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!  
With thy turned-up pantaloons,  
And thy merry whistled tunes,  
With thy red lip, redder still  
Kissed by strawberries on the hull;  
With the sunshine on thy face,  
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;  
From my heart I give thee joy,—  
I was once a barefoot boy! 10  
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man  
Only is republican  
Let the million-dollared rider  
Barefoot, trudging at his side,  
Thou hast more than he can buy  
In the reach of ear and eye,—  
Outward sunshine, inward joy:  
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

<sup>1</sup> Whittier said that "chimney lug" was a reference "to the old custom in New England of hanging a pole with hooks attached to it down the chimney, to hang pots and kettles on." <sup>2</sup> a rustic pronunciation of "been," which in standard American English rhymes with "pin" and in British English with "seen"

Oh for boyhood's painless play,  
 Sleep that wakes in laughing day, 20  
 Health that mocks the doctor's rules,  
 Knowledge never learned of schools,  
 Of the wild bee's morning chase,  
 Of the wild-flower's time and place,  
 Flight of fowl and habitude  
 Of the tenants of the wood,  
 How the tortoise bears his shell,  
 How the woodchuck digs his cell,  
 And the ground-mole sinks his well,  
 How the robin feeds her young, 30  
 How the oriole's nest is hung;  
 Where the whitest lilies blow,  
 Where the freshest berries grow,  
 Where the ground-nut trails its vine,  
 Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;  
 Of the black wasp's cunning way,  
 Mason of his walls of clay,  
 And the architectural plans  
 Of gray hornet artisans!  
 For, eschewing books and tasks, 40  
 Nature answers all he asks;  
 Hand in hand with her he walks,  
 Face to face with her he talks,  
 Part and parcel of her joy,—  
 Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,  
 Crowding years in one brief moon,  
 When all things I heard or saw,  
 Me, their master, waited for.  
 I was rich in flowers and trees, 50  
 Humming-birds and honey-bees;  
 For my sport the squirrel played,  
 Plied the snouted mole his spade;  
 For my taste the blackberry cone  
 Purpled over hedge and stone,  
 Laughed the brook for my delight  
 Through the day and through the night,  
 Whispering at the garden wall,  
 Talked with me from fall to fall,  
 Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond, 60  
 Mine the walnut slopes beyond,  
 Mine, on bending orchard trees,  
 Apples of Hesperides!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In classical mythology the golden apples given to Hera on her marriage to Zeus were guarded by four or five nymphs, helped by a dragon. Both the nymphs and the garden where the apples grew were called the Hesperides. It was one of the labors of Hercules to get some of these apples.

Still as my horizon grew,  
 Larger grew my riches too;  
 All the world I saw or knew  
 Seemed a complex Chinese toy,  
 Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,  
 Like my bowl of milk and bread; 70  
 Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,  
 On the door-stone, gray and rudel  
 O'er me, like a regal tent,  
 Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,  
 Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,  
 Looped in many a wind-swung fold;  
 While for music came the play  
 Of the pied frogs' orchestra;  
 And, to light the noisy choir,  
 Lit the fly his lamp of fire, 80  
 I was monarch, pomp and joy  
 Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,  
 Live and laugh, as boyhood can!  
 Though the flinty slopes be hard,  
 Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,  
 Every morn shall lead thee through  
 Fresh bapisms of the dew;  
 Every evening from thy feet  
 Shall the cool wind kiss the heat: 90  
 All too soon these feet must hide  
 In the prison cells of pride,  
 Lose the freedom of the sod,  
 Like a colt's for work be shod,  
 Made to tread the mulls of toil,  
 Up and down in ceaseless toil.  
 Happy if their track be found  
 Never on forbidden ground;  
 Happy if they sink not in  
 Quick and treacherous sands of sin 100  
 Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,  
 Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

1855

### SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

Whittier wrote to Lowell, then editor of the newly established *Atlantic Monthly*, "I send a bit of a Yankee ballad, the spirit of which pleases me more than the execution. The incident occurred sometime in the last century. The refrain is the actual song of the women on the march. To relish it one must understand the peculiar tone and dialect of the ancient Marbleheaders."

Lowell answered, "I like it all the better for its provincialism. I am familiar with Marblehead and its dialect, and as the burthen is intentionally provincial I have taken the liberty to print it in such a way as shall give the peculiar accent."

The incident on which this poem is based took place in 1807. Whittier heard a bit of rhyme about it when at Haverhill Academy, from a school-mate from Marblehead, and thought the occurrence much older. In reality Captain Ireson was blameless. The crew were responsible for abandoning the disabled vessel but charged him with the crime, and he was tarred and feathered. See Samuel Roads, Jr., *History of Marblehead* (1879).

Of all the rides since the birth of time,  
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—  
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,<sup>1</sup>  
Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,<sup>2</sup>  
Witch astride of a human back,  
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak,—<sup>3</sup>  
The strangest ride that ever was sped  
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women o' Morble'ead! 11

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,  
Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
Captain Ireson stood in the cart  
Scores of women, old and young,  
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:  
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt, 20  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corrd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
Bacchus round some antique vase,

<sup>1</sup> Lucius Apuleius, a Roman satirical writer of the second century, tells in his *Metamorphoses* (generally called *The Golden Ass*) of the many adventures of a young man who had been transformed by magic into an ass. The word "golden" in the title refers to the excellence of the story, and not to the ass as Whittier's words seem to imply. <sup>2</sup> This is a reference to the story told by the third calender in the *Arabian Nights*. <sup>3</sup> According to legend, Mohammed was carried to the seventh heaven on the back of a strange winged, white mule.

Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' rwang,  
Over and over the *Maenads*<sup>1</sup> sang: 30  
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corrd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for huml—He sailed away  
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—  
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,  
With his own town's-people on her deck!  
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.  
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!  
Brag of your catch of fish again!" 40  
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
That wreck shall lie forevermore.  
Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—  
Looked for the coming that might not be! 50  
What did the winds and the sea-birds say  
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,  
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;  
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,  
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.  
Sea-worn grandsires, eripple-bound, 60  
Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,  
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:  
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corrd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road  
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed  
Little the wicked skipper knew  
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue. 70

<sup>1</sup> The frenzied women followers of Bacchus. To Whittier's mind the excited women of Marblehead seemed to resemble the *Maenads* pictured in relief on "some antique vase."

Riding there in his sorry trim,  
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
Of voices shouting, far and near:  
"Here's Flud Orson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corrd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—  
"What to me is this noisy ride?  
What is the shame that clothes the skin 80  
To the nameless horror that lives within?  
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!  
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread  
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"  
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea  
Said, "God has touched him! why should  
we!" 90

Said an old wife mourning her only son,  
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"  
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,  
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,  
And gave him a cloak to hyde him in,  
And left him alone with his shame and sin  
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

1828, 1857

1857

## TELLING THE BEES

It was a folk custom brought from the Old Country to New England to "tell the bees" by dressing their hives in mourning when there was a death in the family. This was supposed to keep the swarms from seeking a new home.

Originally named "The Bees of Fernside" this poem, narrating a sad story, is thought by critics to be one of Whittier's best. The local details, the gap in the wall, the stepping stones in the brook, the barn, the white horns of the cattle, describe faithfully the boyhood scenes of the old farm that was the poet's birthplace.

HERE is the place, right over the hull

Runs the path I took;

You can see the gap in the old wall still,  
And the stepping-stones in the shallow  
brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,  
And the poplars tall;  
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-  
yard,  
And the white horns tossing above the wall

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;  
And down by the brink 10  
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed  
o'errun,  
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,  
Heavy and slow;  
And the same rose blows, and the same sun  
glows,  
And the same brook sings of a year ago

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the  
breeze;  
And the June sun warm  
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,  
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm. 20

I mind me how with a lover's care  
From my Sunday coat  
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my  
hair,  
And cooled at the brookside my brow and  
throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—  
To love, a year;  
Down through the beeches I looked at last  
On the little red gate and the well-sweep  
near

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain  
Of light through the leaves, 30  
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,  
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—  
The house and the trees,  
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the  
door,—  
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,  
Forward and back,  
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,  
Draping each hive with a shred of black. 40

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun  
Had the chill of snow;  
For I knew she was telling the bees of one  
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps  
For the dead today.  
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps  
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,  
With his cane to his chin, 50  
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still  
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since  
In my ear sounds on—  
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!  
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

1858

## MY PLAYMATE

First published in the *Atlantic Monthly* The original title was "Eleanor." Tennyson admired this gentle, pensive poem. T. W. Higginson gave it high praise, pointing out, among other features, the majority of monosyllables in the lines, the occasional use of telling polysyllables, and the harmonious combinations of sounds. Mordell affirms that the girl of this poem is that of "Memories," Mary Emerson Smith.

THE pines were dark on Ramoth hill,<sup>1</sup>  
Their song was soft and low,  
The blossoms in the sweet May wind  
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,  
The orchard birds sang clear;  
The sweetest and the saddest day  
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers, 10  
My playmate left her home,  
And took with her the laughing spring,  
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,  
She laid her hand in mine.  
What more could ask the bashful boy  
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:  
The constant years told o'er  
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,  
But she came back no more. 20

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round  
Of uneventful years,  
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring  
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year  
Her summer roses blow;  
The dusky children of the sun  
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jeweled hands  
She smooths her silken gown,— 30  
No more the homespun lap wherein  
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,  
The brown nuts on the hill,  
And still the May-day flowers make sweet  
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,  
The bird builds in the tree,  
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill  
The slow song of the sea 40

I wonder if she thinks of them,  
And how the old time seems,—  
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice.  
Does she remember mine?<sup>2</sup>  
And what to her is now the boy  
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build  
For other eyes than ours,— 50  
That other hands with nuts are filled,  
And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!  
Our mossy seat is green,  
Its fringing violets blossom yet,  
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern  
A sweeter memory blow;  
And there in spring the veeries sing  
The song of long ago. 60

<sup>1</sup> About two miles from the Whittier home at Amesbury. The woods of Follymill (line 36), noted for may-flowers, were near by.



And still the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are moaning like the sea,—  
The moaning of the sea of change  
Between myself and thee!

1859-1860

1860

## LAUS DEO!

The Latin title, "Praise be to God," is from the Vulgate, the medieval Latin version of the Scriptures. As first published the poem had the subtitle "On hearing the bells ring for the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery in the United States." The ratification by the required number of states was announced Dec. 18, 1865. Whittier was sitting in the Friends' meeting house at Amesbury when the bells rang out.

It is done!  
Clang of bell and roar of gun  
Send the tidings up and down.  
How the belfries rock and reel  
How the great guns, peal on peal,  
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O Bells!  
Every stroke exulting tells  
Of the burial hour of crime  
Loud and long, that all may hear, 10  
Ring for every listening ear  
Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel  
God's own voice is in that peal,  
And this spot is holy ground  
Lord, forgive us! What are we,  
That our eyes thus glory see,  
That our ears have heard the sound!

For the Lord  
On the whirlwind<sup>1</sup> is abroad, 20  
In the earthquake He has spoken;  
He has smitten with His thunder  
The iron walls asunder,  
And the gates of brass are broken!

Loud and long  
Lift the old exulting song;  
Sing with Miriam by the sea,<sup>2</sup>  
He has cast the mighty down,  
Horse and rider sink and drown;  
"He hath triumphed gloriously!" 30

<sup>1</sup> Job 28 ff    <sup>2</sup> Exodus 15, 21

Did we dare,  
In our agony of prayer,  
Ask for more than He has done?  
When was ever His right hand  
Over any time or land  
Stretched as now beneath the sun?

How they pale,  
Ancient myth and song and tale,  
In this wonder of our days,  
When the cruel rod of war 40  
Blossoms white with righteous law,  
And the wrath of man is praise!

Blotted out!  
All within and all about  
Shall a fresher life begin,  
Freer breathe the universe  
As it rolls its heavy curse  
On the dead and buried sin!

It is done!  
In the circuit of the sun 50  
Shall the sound thereof go forth  
It shall bid the sad rejoice,  
It shall give the dumb a voice,  
It shall belt with joy the earth!

Ring and swing,  
Bells of joy! On morning's wing  
Send the song of praise abroad!  
With a sound of broken chains  
Tell the nations that He reigns,  
Who alone is Lord and God! 60  
1865

## SNOW-BOUND

## A WINTER IDYL

Whittier's *Snow-Bound* is very generally regarded as his masterpiece. It is chiefly a poem of description and character, a beautiful picture of a family circle and home. A record of a type of life that has vanished, or all but vanished, this poem of a New England farmhouse in midwinter, and the group about its fireside, is a social document of high value.

As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the

Sun, but also by our common VWood Fire and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of VWood doth the same.—*Coar. AGRIPPA, Occult Philosophy, Book I, ch. v.*

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,  
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,  
Seems nowhere to alight the whited air  
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,  
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end  
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet  
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates at  
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed  
In a tumultuous privacy of storm

EMERSON, *The Snow-Storm*

THE sun that brief December day  
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,  
And, darkly circled, gave at noon  
A sadder light than waning moon.  
Slow tracing down the thickening sky  
Its mute and ominous prophecy,  
A portent seeming less than threat,  
It sank from sight before it set.  
A chill no coat, however stout,  
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out, 10  
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,

That checked, mid-vein, the circling race  
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,  
The coming of the snow-storm told.  
The wind blew east.<sup>1</sup> we heard the roar  
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,  
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there  
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—  
Brought in the wood from out of doors, 20  
Littered the stalls, and from the mows  
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows;  
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn,  
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,  
Impatient down the stanchion rows  
The cattle shake their walnut bows;<sup>2</sup>  
While, peering from his early perch  
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,  
The cock his crested helmet bent  
And down his querulous challenge sent. 30

<sup>1</sup> That is, the wind blew from the east. The Whittier home was about fifteen miles from the Atlantic and under the conditions described the sound of the sea beating upon the shore could be faintly heard. <sup>2</sup> The stanchions were upright bars with walnut bows attached by which cattle were held in their stalls.

Unwarmed by any sunset light  
The gray day darkened into night,  
A night made hoary with the swarm.  
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,  
As zigzag wavering to and fro,  
Crossed and recrossed the winged snow:  
And ere the early bedtime came  
The white drift piled the window-frame,  
And through the glass the clothes-line posts  
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts. 40

So all night long the storm roared on:  
The morning broke without a sun,  
In tiny spherule traced with lines  
Of Nature's geometric signs,  
In starry flake and pellicle,  
All day the hoary meteor fell;  
And, when the second morning shone,  
We looked upon a world unknown,  
On nothing we could call our own.  
Around the glistening wonder bent 50  
The blue walls of the firmament,  
No cloud above, no earth below,—  
A universe of sky and snow!  
The old familiar sights of ours  
Took marvelous shapes, strange domes and  
towers

Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,  
Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;  
A smooth white mound the brush-pile  
showed,  
A fenceless drift what once was road;  
The bridle-post an old man sat 60  
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;  
The well-curb had a Chinese roof,<sup>1</sup>  
And even the long sweep, high aloof,  
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell  
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.<sup>2</sup>

A prompt, decisive man, no breath  
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"  
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy  
Count such a summons less than joy?)  
Our buskins on our feet we drew; 70  
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,  
To guard our necks and ears from snow,  
We cut the solid whiteness through.

<sup>1</sup> Whittier explained to a schoolgirl that, while the curb was uncovered, there was a board across at one side, forming a shelf on which the bucket stood. The snow piled up on this board to create the effect described.

<sup>2</sup> This famous bell tower at Pisa, Italy, leans about 16 feet out of the perpendicular in a height of about 180 feet.

And, where the drift was deepest, made  
 A tunnel walled and overlaid  
 With dazzling crystal. we had read  
 Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,<sup>1</sup>  
 And to our own his name we gave,  
 With many a wish the luck were ours  
 To test his lamp's supernal powers. 80  
 We reached the barn with merry din,  
 And roused the prisoned brutes within.  
 The old horse thrust his long head out,  
 And grave with wonder gazed about,  
 The cock his lusty greening said,  
 And forth his speckled harem led,  
 The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,  
 And mild reproach of hunger looked;  
 The horned patriarch of the sheep,  
 Like Egypt's Amun<sup>2</sup> roused from sleep, 90  
 Shook his sage head with gesture mute,  
 And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore  
 The loosening drift its breath before;  
 Low circling round its southern zone,  
 The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone  
 No church-bell lent its Christian tone  
 To the savage air, no social smoke  
 Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.  
 A solitude made more intense 100  
 By dreary-voiced elements,  
 The shrieking of the mindless wind,  
 The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,  
 And on the glass the unmeaning beat  
 Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet  
 Beyond the circle of our hearth  
 No welcome sound of toil or mirth  
 Unbound the spell, and testified  
 Of human life and thought outside.  
 We minded that the sharpest ear 110  
 The buried brooklet could not hear,  
 The music of whose liquid lip  
 Had been to us companionship,  
 And, in our lonely life, had grown  
 To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest  
 Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,  
 The sun, a snow-blown traveler, sank

From sight beneath the smothering bank,  
 We piled with care our nightly stack 120  
 Of wood against the chimney-back,—  
 The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,  
 And on its top the stout backstuck,  
 The knotty forestuck laid apart,  
 And filled between with curious art  
 The ragged brush; then, hovering near,  
 We watched the first red blaze appear,  
 Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam  
 On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,  
 Until the old, rude-furnished room 130  
 Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;  
 While radiant with a mimic flame  
 Outside the sparkling drift became,  
 And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree  
 Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.  
 The crane and pendent trammels<sup>3</sup> showed,  
 The Turks' heads on the andirons<sup>2</sup> glowed,  
 While childish fancy, prompt to tell  
 The meaning of the miracle,  
 Whispered the old rhyme "*Under the tree 140*  
*When fire outdoors burns merrily,*  
*There the witches are making tea*"<sup>3</sup>

The moon above the eastern wood  
 Shone at its full, the hill-range stood  
 Transfigured in the silver flood,  
 Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,  
 Dead white, save where some sharp ravine  
 Took shadow, or the somber green  
 Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black  
 Against the whiteness at their back. 150  
 For such a world and such a night  
 Most fitting that unwarming light,  
 Which only seemed where'er it fell  
 To make the coldness visible

Shut in from all the world without,  
 We sat the clean-winged hearth about,  
 Content to let the north-wind roar  
 In baffled rage at pane and door,  
 While the red logs before us beat

<sup>1</sup> The crane was a swinging iron bar, projecting from the back or side of the fireplace, with hooks (trammels) hanging from it for holding cooking vessels over the fire.

<sup>2</sup> The ornamented tops of the uprights of the andirons were rounded in imitation of the fez worn by Turks.

<sup>3</sup> According to an old superstition, the reflection of the fire on the snow outside was the witches' fire and it was not safe to go out of doors and to stand in the reflection.

<sup>1</sup> The story referred to is in the *Arabian Nights*. When Aladdin rubbed the lamp which he had carried into the cave, a jinni would appear to grant anything he might wish. <sup>2</sup> One of the chief Egyptian gods, represented as a ram

The frost-line back with tropic heat; 160  
 And ever, when a louder blast  
 Shook beam and rafter as it passed,  
 The merrier up its roaring draught  
 The great throat of the chimney laughed;  
 The house-dog on his paws outspread  
 Laid to the fire his drowsy head,  
 The cat's dark silhouette on the wall  
 A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;  
 And, for the winter fireside meet,  
 Between the andirons' straddling feet, 170  
 The mug of cider summered slow,  
 The apples sputtered in a row,  
 And, close at hand, the basket stood  
 With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?  
 What matter how the north-wind raved?  
 Blow high, blow low, not all its snow  
 Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.  
 O Time and Change!—with hair as gray  
 As was my sire's that winter day, 180  
 How strange it seems, with so much gone  
 Of life and love, to still live on!  
 Ah, brother!<sup>1</sup> only I and thou  
 Are left of all that circle now,—  
 The dear home faces whereupon  
 That fitful firelight paled and shone.  
 Henceforward, listen as we will,  
 The voices of that hearth are still,  
 Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,  
 Those lighted faces smile no more. 190

We tread the paths their feet have worn,  
 We sit beneath their orchard-trees,  
 We hear, like them, the hum of bees  
 And rustle of the bladed corn;  
 We turn the pages that they read,  
 Their written words we linger o'er,  
 But in the sun they cast no shade,  
 No voice is heard, no sign is made,  
 No step is on the conscious floor!  
 Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust, 200  
 (Since He who knows our need is just,)
 That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.  
 Alas for him who never sees  
 The stars shine through his cypress-trees!  
 Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,  
 Nor looks to see the breaking day  
 Across the mournful marbles play!

<sup>1</sup> Whittier's younger brother Matthew died in 1883 at the age of seventy-one

Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,  
 The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
 That Life is ever lord of Death, 210  
 And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,  
 Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,  
 Or stammered from our school-book lore  
 "The chief of Gambia's golden shore."<sup>1</sup>  
 How often since, when all the land  
 Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,  
 As if a trumpet called, I've heard,  
 Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word.  
 "Does not the voice of reason cry, 220  
 Claim the first right which Nature gave,  
 From the red scourge of bondage fly,  
 Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"  
 Our father<sup>2</sup> rode again his ride  
 On Memphremagog's wooded side;  
 Sat down again to moose and camp  
 In trapper's hut and Indian camp;  
 Lived o'er the old idyllic ease  
 Beneath St. François' hemlock trees;  
 Again for him the moonlight shone 230  
 On Norman cap and bodiced zone;  
 Again he heard the violin play  
 Which led the village dance away,  
 And mingled in its merry whirl  
 The grandam and the laughing girl.  
 Or, nearer home, our steps he led  
 Where Salisbury's level marshes spread  
 Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;  
 Where merry mowers, hale and strong,  
 Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths  
 along 240

The low green prairies of the sea.  
 We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,  
 And round the rocky Isles of Shoals  
 The hake-broil on the driftwood coals;  
 The chowder on the sand-beach made,

<sup>1</sup> See the third stanza of "The African Chief," by Sarah Wentworth Morton, on p. 300. The four lines (220-223) quoted below are from the same poem, forming the fourth stanza. Whittier's memory was at fault in attributing them to Dame Mercy Warren. In later editions lines 218-219 were changed to read

"As if a far-blown trumpet stirred  
 The languorous sin-sick air, I heard."

<sup>2</sup> John Whittier, the poet's father, died in 1850. As a young man, he had made the trips into Canada of which he tells in these lines.

Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,  
 With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.  
 We heard the tales of witchcraft old,  
 And dream and sign and marvel told  
 To sleepy listeners as they lay  
 Stretched idly on the salted hay  
 Adrift along the winding shores,  
 When favoring breezes deigned to blow  
 The square sail of the gundalow,  
 And idle lay the useless oars

Our mother,<sup>1</sup> while she turned her wheel  
 Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,  
 Told how the Indian hordes came down  
 At midnight on Cocheco town,  
 And how her own great-uncle bore  
 His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.  
 Recalling, in her fitting phrase,  
 So rich and picturesque and free,  
 (The common unrimed poetry  
 Of simple life and country ways)  
 The story of her early days,—  
 She made us welcome to her home;  
 Old hearths grew wide to give us room;  
 We stole with her a frightened look  
 At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,<sup>2</sup>  
 The fame whereof went far and wide  
 Through all the simple country-side,  
 We heard the hawks at twilight play,  
 The boat-horn on Piscataqua,  
 The loon's weird laughter far away;  
 We fished her little trout-brook, knew  
 What flowers in wood and meadow grew,  
 What sunny hillsides autumn-brown  
 She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,  
 Saw where in sheltered cove and bay  
 The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,  
 And heard the wild-geese calling loud  
 Beneath the gray November cloud

Then, haply, with a look more grave,  
 And soberer tone, some tale she gave  
 From painful Sewel's ancient tome,<sup>3</sup>  
 Beloved in every Quaker home,  
 Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,

Or Chalkley's Journal,<sup>4</sup> old and quaint,—  
 Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!—  
 Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,  
 And water-burt and bread-cask failed,  
 And cruel, hungry eyes pursued  
 His portly presence, mad for food,  
 With dark hints muttered under breath  
 Of casting lots for life or death,  
 Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,  
 To be himself the sacrifice  
 Then, suddenly, as if to save  
 The good man from his living grave,  
 A ripple on the water grew,  
 A school of porpoise flashed in view  
 "Take, eat," he said, "and be content;  
 These fishes in my stead are sent  
 By Him who gave the tangled ram<sup>5</sup>  
 To spare the child of Abraham "

Our uncle,<sup>6</sup> innocent of books,  
 Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,  
 The ancient teachers never dumb  
 Of Nature's unhoused lyceum  
 In moons and tides and weather wise,  
 He read the clouds as prophecies,  
 And foul or fair could well divine,  
 By many an occult hint and sign,  
 Holding the cunning-warded keys<sup>7</sup>  
 To all the woodcraft mysteries,  
 Himself to Nature's heart so near  
 That all her voices in his ear  
 Of beast or bird had meanings clear,  
 Like Apollonius of old,  
 Who knew the tales the sparrows told,  
 Or Hermes, who interpreted  
 What the sage cranes of Nilus said,  
 A simple, guileless, childlike man,  
 Content to live where life began;  
 Strong only on his native grounds,  
 The little world of sights and sounds  
 Whose girdle was the parish bounds,  
 Whereof his fondly partial pride  
 The common features magnified,  
 As Surrey hills to mountains grew  
 In White of Selborne's loving view,—

<sup>1</sup> Abigail Hussey Whittier, who died in 1857  
<sup>2</sup> This was a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* from which Whittier quoted in his note at the beginning of *Snow-Bound*. <sup>3</sup> William Sewel's *History of the Quakers* was "painful" (i.e., painstaking) rather than enlivening

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Chalkley, a traveling Quaker preacher, tells the story substantially as remembered by Whittier's mother. <sup>5</sup> Genesis 22:13. <sup>6</sup> Moses Whittier, bachelor uncle, died in 1824. <sup>7</sup> The wards of a key are the notches that allow it, when turned, to pass the projections in the lock. Whittier's compound word suggests an intricately made key

He told how teal and loon he shot,  
 And how the eagle's eggs he got,  
 The feats on pond and river done,  
 The prodigies of rod and gun;  
 Till, warming with the tales he told,  
 Forgotten was the outside cold,  
 The bitter wind unheeded blew,  
 From ripening corn the pigeons flew, 340  
 The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink  
 Went fishing down the river-brink.  
 In fields with bean or clover gay,  
 The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,  
 Peered from the doorway of his cell;  
 The muskrat plied the mason's trade,  
 And tier by tier his mud-walls laid,  
 And from the shagbark overhead  
 The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell

Next, the dear aunt,<sup>1</sup> whose smile of cheer 350  
 And voice in dreams I see and hear,—  
 The sweetest woman ever Fate  
 Perverse denied a household mate,  
 Who, lonely, homeless, not the less  
 Found peace in love's unselfishness,  
 And welcome whereso'er she went,  
 A calm and gracious element,  
 Whose presence seemed the sweet income  
 And womanly atmosphere of home,—  
 Called up her girlhood memories, 360  
 The huskings and the apple-bees,  
 The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,  
 Weaving through all the poor details  
 And homespun warp of circumstance  
 A golden woof-thread of romance.  
 For well she kept her genial mood  
 And simple faith of maidenhood,  
 Before her snail a cloud-land lay,  
 The mirage loomed across her way,  
 The morning dew, that dries so soon 370  
 With others, glistened at her noon,  
 Through years of toil and soil and care,  
 From glossy tress to thin gray hair,  
 All unprofaned she held apart  
 The virgin fancies of the heart.  
 Be shame to him of woman born  
 Who hath for such but thought of scorn

There, too, our elder sister<sup>2</sup> plied  
 Her evening task the stand beside;

A full, rich nature, free to trust, 380  
 Truthful and almost sternly just,  
 Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,  
 And make her generous thought a fact,  
 Keeping with many a light disguise  
 The secret of self-sacrifice.  
 O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best  
 That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,  
 Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!  
 How many a poor one's blessing went  
 With thee beneath the low green tent 390  
 Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part  
 Of all she saw, and let her heart  
 Against the household bosom lean,  
 Upon the motley-braided mat  
 Our youngest<sup>1</sup> and our dearest sat,  
 Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,  
 Now bathed within the fadeless green  
 And holy peace of Paradise  
 Oh, looking from some heavenly hill, 400  
 Or from the shade of sandy palms,  
 Or silver reach of river calms,  
 Do those large eyes behold me still?  
 With me one little year ago:—  
 The chill weight of the winter snow  
 For months upon her grave has lain,  
 And now, when summer south-winds blow  
 And brier and harebell bloom again,  
 I tread the pleasant paths we trod,  
 I see the violet-sprinkled sod 410  
 Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak  
 The hillside flowers she loved to seek,  
 Yet following me where'er I went  
 With dark eyes full of love's content.  
 The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills  
 The air with sweetness; all the hills  
 Stretch green to June's unclouded sky,  
 But still I wait with ear and eye  
 For something gone which should be nigh,  
 A loss in all familiar things, 420  
 In flower that blooms, and bird that sings  
 And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,  
 Am I not richer than of old?  
 Safe in thy immortality,  
 What change can reach the wealth I hold?  
 What chance can mar the pearl and gold  
 Thy love hath left in trust with me?

<sup>1</sup> Mercy Hussey, sister of Whittier's mother, died in 1866. <sup>2</sup> Mary, later married to Jacob Caldwell, died in 1860.

<sup>1</sup> Whittier's sister Elizabeth died in 1864, the year before *Snow-Bound* was written.

And while in life's late afternoon,  
 Where cool and long the shadows grow,  
 I walk to meet the night that soon 430  
 Shall shape and shadow overflow,  
 I cannot feel that thou art far,  
 Since near at need the angels are;  
 And when the sunset gates unbar,  
 Shall I not see thee waiting stand,  
 And, white against the evening star,  
 The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,<sup>1</sup>  
 The master of the district school  
 Held at the fire his favored place, 440  
 Its warm glow lit a laughing face  
 Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared  
 The uncertain prophecy of beard.  
 He teased the mitten-blinded cat,<sup>2</sup>  
 Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,  
 Sang songs, and told us what befalls  
 In classic Dartmouth's college halls  
 Born the wild Northern hills among,  
 From whence his yeoman father wrung  
 By patient toil subsistence scant, 450  
 Not competence and yet not want,  
 He early gained the power to pay  
 His cheerful, self-reliant way;  
 Could doff at ease his scholar's gown  
 To peddle wares from town to town;  
 Or through the long vacation's reach  
 In lonely lowland districts teach,  
 Where all the droll experience found  
 At stranger hearths in boarding round,  
 The moonlit skater's keen delight, 460  
 The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,  
 The rustic party, with its rough  
 Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,  
 And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,  
 His winter task a pastime made.  
 Happy the snow-locked homes whereon  
 He tuned his merry violin,  
 Or played the athlete in the barn,  
 Or held the good dame's winding yarn,  
 Or mirth-provoking versions told 470  
 Of classic legends rare and old,  
 Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome  
 Had all the commonplace of home,  
 And little seemed at best the odds  
 "Twixt Yankee pedlars and old gods;

Where Pindus-born Araxes took  
 The guise of any grist-mill brook,  
 And dread Olympus at his will  
 Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed; 480  
 But at his desk he had the look  
 And air of one who wisely schemed,  
 And hostage from the future took<sup>1</sup>  
 In trained thought and lore of book.  
 Large-brained, clear-eyed,—of such as he  
 Shall Freedom's young apostles be,  
 Who, following in War's bloody trail,  
 Shall every lingering wrong assail,  
 All chains from limb and spirit strike, 490  
 Uplift the black and white alike;  
 Scatter before their swift advance  
 The darkness and the ignorance,  
 The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,  
 Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,  
 Made murder pastime, and the hell  
 Of prison-torture possible;  
 The cruel lie of caste refute,  
 Old forms remold, and substitute  
 For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,  
 For blind routine, wise-handed skill, 500  
 A school-house plant on every hill,  
 Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence  
 The quick wires of intelligence;  
 Till North and South together brought  
 Shall own the same electric thought,  
 In peace a common flag salute,  
 And, side by side in labor's free  
 And unresentful rivalry,  
 Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest<sup>2</sup> that winter night 510  
 Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light  
 Unmarked by time, and yet not young,  
 The honeyed music of her tongue  
 And words of meekness scarcely told  
 A nature passionate and bold,  
 Strong, self-concentered, spurning guide,  
 Its milder features dwarfed beside  
 Her unbent will's majestic pride.

<sup>1</sup> Being wise enough to foresee the future trend of events, he could use that insight as a guide in the affairs of the present. <sup>2</sup> Whittier said this was "Harriet Livermore, daughter of Judge Livermore, of New Hampshire, a young woman of fine natural ability, enthusiastic, eccentric, with slight control over her violent temper, which sometimes made her religious profession doubtful."

<sup>1</sup> George Haskell, Dartmouth student. <sup>2</sup> An old trick in teasing a cat was to slip a mitten over its head.

She sat among us, at the best,  
A not unfear'd, half-welcome guest, 320  
Rebuking with her cultured phrase  
Our homeliness of words and ways.  
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace

Swayed the lithe limbs and drooped the  
lash,

Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;  
And under low brows, black with night,  
Rayed out at times a dangerous light,  
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face  
Presaging ill to him whom Fate  
Condemned to share her love or hate. 330

A woman tropical, intense  
In thought and act, in soul and sense,  
She blended in a like degree  
The vixen and the devotee,  
Revealing with each freak or feint

The temper of Petruchio's Kate,<sup>1</sup>  
The raptures of Siena's saint.<sup>2</sup>  
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist  
Had facile power to form a fist;  
The warm, dark languish of her eyes 540  
Was never safe from wrath's surprise  
Brows saintly calm and lips devout  
Knew every change of scowl and pout,  
And the sweet voice had notes more  
lugh

And shrill for social battle-cry

Since then what old cathedral town  
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,  
What convent-gate has held its lock  
Against the challenge of her knock!  
Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thor-  
oughfares, 550

Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,  
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem  
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,  
Or startling on her desert throne  
The crazy Queen of Lebanon<sup>3</sup>  
With claims fantastic as her own,  
Her tireless feet have held their way;  
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,

<sup>1</sup> the high-tempered heroine of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*    <sup>2</sup> Saint Catherine of Siena, noted for her mildness and charity    <sup>3</sup> Lady Hester Stanhope, eccentric religious enthusiast, who established herself on the slope of Mt. Lebanon, where she awaited the second coming of Christ. Miss Livermore lived with her for some time, but the two finally quarreled.

She watches under Eastern skies,  
With hope each day renewed and fresh, 560  
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,  
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,  
The Lord's sweet pity with her go!  
The outward wayward life we see,  
The hidden springs we may not know.  
Nor is it given us to discern  
What threads the fatal sisters<sup>1</sup> spun,  
Through what ancestral years has run  
The sorrow with the woman born, 570  
What forged her cruel chain of moods,  
What set her feet in solitudes,  
And held the love within her mute,  
What mingled madness in the blood,  
A life-long discord and annoy,  
Water of tears with oil of joy,  
And hid within the folded bud  
Perversities of flower and fruit.

It is not ours to separate  
The tangled skein of will and fate, 580  
To show what metes and bounds should stand  
Upon the soul's debatable land,  
And between choice and Providence  
Divide the circle of events,  
But He who knows our frame is just,  
Merciful and compassionate,  
And full of sweet assurances  
And hope for all the language is,  
That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low, 590  
Sent out a dull and duller glow,  
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,  
Ticking its weary circuit through,  
Pointed with mutely-warning sign  
Its black hand to the hour of mine.  
That sign the pleasant circle broke:  
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,  
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray  
And laid it tenderly away,  
Then roused himself to safely cover 600  
The dull red brands with ashes over.  
And while, with care, our mother laid  
The work aside, her steps she stayed

<sup>1</sup> In Greek mythology, the three Fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, who respectively spun the thread of life, drew it out to its destined length, and snipped it off.



One moment, seeking to express  
 Her grateful sense of happiness  
 For food and shelter, warmth and health,  
 And love's contentment more than wealth,  
 With simple wishes (not the weak,  
 Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,  
 But such as warm the generous heart, 610  
 O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)  
 That none might lack, that bitter night,  
 For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard  
 The wind that round the gables roared,  
 With now and then a ruder shock,  
 Which made our very bedsteads rock.  
 We heard the loosened clapboards tost,  
 The board-nails snapping in the frost;  
 And on us, through the unplastered wall, 620  
 Felt the light-sifted snow-flakes fall;  
 But sleep stole on, as sleep will do  
 When hearts are light and life is new;  
 Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,  
 Till in the summer-land of dreams  
 They softened to the sound of streams,  
 Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,  
 And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout  
 Of merry voices hugh and clear; 630  
 And saw the teamsters drawing near  
 To break the drifted highways out.  
 Down the long hillside treading slow  
 We saw the half-buried oxen go,  
 Shaking the snow from heads uptost,  
 Their straining nostrils white with frost.  
 Before our door the straggling train  
 Drew up, an added team to gain  
 The elders threshed their hands a-cold,  
 Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes 640  
 From lip to lip, the younger folks  
 Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,  
 Then toiled again the cavalcade  
 O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,  
 And woodland paths that wound between  
 Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighted.  
 From every barn a team afoot,  
 At every house a new recruit,  
 Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,  
 Haply the watchful young men saw 650  
 Sweet doorway pictures of the curls  
 And curious eyes of merry girls,

Lifting their hands in mock defense  
 Against the snow-ball's compliments,  
 And reading in each missive tost  
 The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound,  
 And, following where the teamsters led,  
 The wise old Doctor<sup>1</sup> went his round,  
 Just pausing at our door to say, 660  
 In the brief autocratic way  
 Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,  
 Was free to urge her claim on all,  
 That some poor neighbor sick abed  
 At night our mother's aid would need  
 For, one in generous thought and deed,  
 What mattered in the sufferer's sight  
 The Quaker matron's inward light,  
 The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed<sup>2</sup> 670  
 All hearts confess the saints elect  
 Who, twain in faith, in love agree,  
 And melt not in an acid sect  
 The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed  
 Since the great world was heard from last  
 The almanac we studied o'er,  
 Read and reread our little store  
 Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;  
 One harmless novel, mostly hid  
 From younger eyes, a book forbid, 680  
 And poetry, (or good or bad,  
 A single book was all we had,)  
 Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,  
 A stranger to the heathen Nine,  
 Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,  
 The wars of David and the Jews.  
 At last the floundering carrier bore  
 The village paper to our door.  
 Lo! broadening outward as we read,  
 To warmer zones the horizon spread, 690  
 In panoramic length unrolled  
 We saw the marvels that it told<sup>2</sup>  
 Before us passed the painted Creeks,  
 And daft McGregor on his raids  
 In Costa Rica's everglades.

<sup>1</sup> Dr Elias Weld of Rocks Village    <sup>2</sup> The contents of the village paper indicate that the scenes described in *Snow-Bound* took place when Whittier was about fifteen years of age. The Creek Indians were removed to Indian Territory in 1821. Sir George McGregor was attempting to form a colony in Costa Rica in 1822, and the struggle of the Greeks for their independence from Turkey was going on then.

And up Taygetos winding slow  
 Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,  
 A Turk's head at each saddle bow!  
 Welcome to us its week-old news,  
 Its corner for the rustic Muse,

Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,  
 Its record, mingling in a breath  
 The wedding bell and dirge of death;  
 Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,  
 The latest culprit sent to jail;  
 Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,  
 Its vendue sales and goods at cost,  
 And traffic calling loud for gain.  
 We felt the stir of hall and street,  
 The pulse of life that round us beat;  
 The chill embargo of the snow  
 Was melted in the genial glow,  
 Wide swung again our ice-locked door,  
 And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look  
 And folded wings of ashen gray  
 And voice of echoes far away,  
 The brazen covers of thy book;  
 The weird palimpsest<sup>1</sup> old and vast,  
 Wherein thou had'st the spectral past;  
 Where, closely mingling, pale and glow  
 The characters of joy and woe;  
 The monographs of outlived years,  
 Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,  
 Green hills of life that slope to death,  
 And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees  
 Shade off to mournful cypresses

With the white amaranth underneath.  
 Even while I look, I can but heed  
 The restless sands' incessant fall,  
 Importunate hours that hours succeed,  
 Each clamorous with its own sharp need,  
 And duty keeping pace with all.  
 Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;  
 I hear again the voice that bids  
 The dreamer leave his dream midway  
 For larger hopes and graver fears:  
 Life greatens in these later years,  
 The century's aloe<sup>2</sup> flowers today!

<sup>1</sup> a parchment which has been written over more than once, former writings having been erased <sup>2</sup> The century plant was formerly supposed to bloom only once in a century. The finest achievement of the first century of America's independence, to Whittier's mind, was the abolition of slavery, with its promises for the future.

Yet, haply, in some hush of life,  
 Some Truce of God which breaks its strife  
 The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,  
 Dreaming in throngful city ways  
 Of winter joys his boyhood knew;  
 And dear and early friends—the few  
 Who yet remain—shall pause to view  
 These Flemish pictures<sup>1</sup> of old days;  
 Sit with me by the homestead hearth,  
 And stretch the hands of memory forth  
 To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!  
 And thanks untraced to lips unknown  
 Shall greet me like the odors blown  
 From unseen meadows newly mown,  
 Or lilies floating in some pond,  
 Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;  
 The traveler owns the grateful sense  
 Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,  
 And, pausing, takes with forehead bare  
 The benediction of the air.

1865

1866

## ABRAHAM DAVENPORT

Whittier's note, prefixed to this poem, reads "The famous Dark Day of New England, May 19, 1780, was a physical puzzle for many years to our ancestors, but its occurrence brought something more than philosophical speculation into the minds of those who passed through it. Abraham Davenport's sturdy protest is a matter of history." For the occurrence, see J. W. Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections* (1836), 407.

In the old days (a custom laid aside  
 With breeches and cocked hats) the people  
 sent  
 Their wisest men to make the public laws.  
 And so, from a brown homestead, where the  
 Sound  
 Drinks the small tribute of the Mianas,<sup>2</sup>  
 Waved over by the woods of Rippowams,  
 And hallowed by pure lives and tranquil  
 deaths,  
 Stamford sent up to the councils of the State  
 Wisdom and grace in Abraham Davenport.

<sup>1</sup> The originators of the Flemish school were the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck. Its greatest later artists were Rubens, Van Dyck, and Teniers the younger. It was noted for its realism, attention to detail, and domestic subjects. <sup>2</sup> Mianas and Rippowams, small streams in Connecticut near Stamford.

"Twas on a May-day of the far old year 10  
 Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell  
 Over the bloom and sweet life of the Spring,  
 Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,  
 A horror of great darkness, like the night  
 In day of which the Norland sagas<sup>1</sup> tell,—  
 The Twilight of the Gods. The low-hung sky  
 Was black with ominous clouds, save where  
 its rim

Was fringed with a dull glow, like that which  
 climbs

The crater's sides from the red hell below.  
 Birds ceased to sing, and all the barn-yard  
 fowls 20

Roosted; the cattle at the pasture bars  
 Loved, and looked homeward, bats on  
 leathern wings

Flied abroad; the sounds of labor died;  
 Men prayed, and women wept; all ears grew  
 sharp

To hear the doom-blast of the trumpet shatter  
 The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ  
 Might loom from the rent clouds, not as he  
 looked

A loving guest at Bethany, but stern  
 As Justice and inexorable Law.

Meanwhile in the old State House, dim as  
 ghosts, 30

Sat the lawgivers of Connecticut,  
 Trembling beneath their legislative robes  
 "It is the Lord's Great Day! Let us adjourn,"  
 Some said, and then, as if with one accord,  
 All eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.  
 He rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice  
 The intolerable hush. "Thus well may be  
 The Day of Judgment which the world  
 awaits,

But be it so or not, I only know  
 My present duty, and my Lord's command  
 To occupy till He come. So at the post 41  
 Where He hath set me in His providence,  
 I choose, for one, to meet Him face to face,—  
 No faithless servant frightened from my task,  
 But ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;  
 And therefore, with all reverence, I would say,  
 Let God do His work, we will see to ours.  
 Bring in the candles." And they brought  
 them in.

<sup>1</sup> the Norse heroic tales of the final destruction of the world in the warfare between the gods and the giants

Then by the flaring lights the Speaker read,  
 Albert with husky voice and shaking hands, 50  
 An act to amend an act to regulate  
 The shad and alewife fisheries. Whereupon  
 Wisely and well spake Abraham Davenport,  
 Straight to the question, with no figures of  
 speech

Save the ten Arab signs, yet not without  
 The shrewd dry humor natural to the man.  
 His awe-struck colleagues listening all the  
 while,

Between the pauses of his argument,  
 To hear the thunder of the wrath of God. 59  
 Break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud.

And there he stands in memory to this day,  
 Erect, self-poised, a rugged face, half seen  
 Against the background of unnatural dark,  
 A witness to the ages as they pass,  
 That simple duty hath no place for fear

1866

1867

### From AMONG THE HILLS

Originally planned as a companion piece to *Snow-Bound*, under the name "A Summer Idyl." The story itself, not printed here, concerns the winning of "a city's fair, pale daughter" to his rustic life and region by a "sun-brown farmer." Touches of realism in the "Prelude" show that Whittier, had he wished, could have emphasized the hard monotonous sides of country life as do present-day writers. Instead he delights in honest labor, his characters perform their daily tasks gladly, not complainingly.

#### Prelude

ALONG the roadside, like the flowers of gold  
 That tawny Incas<sup>1</sup> for their gardens wrought,  
 Heavy with sunshine droops the goldenrod,  
 And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers  
 Hang motionless upon their upright staves  
 The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,  
 Wing-weary with its long flight from the  
 south,

Unfelt; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf  
 With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,  
 Confesses it. The locust by the wall 10  
 Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.

<sup>1</sup> the predominant tribe of Indians in Peru, a people unusually advanced in civilization at the time of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century

A single hay-cart down the dusty road  
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep  
On the load's top. Against the neighboring  
hill,

Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,  
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still  
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door  
A drowsy smell of flowers—gray heliotrope,  
And white sweet clover, and shy mignon-  
ette—

Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends 20  
To the pervading symphony of peace

No time is this for hands long over-worn  
To task their strength: and (unto Him be  
praise

Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain  
Of years that did the work of centuries  
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath  
once more

Freely and full.<sup>1</sup> So, as yon harvesters  
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms  
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,  
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn 30  
The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dream-  
ing o'er

Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,  
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,  
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft, and  
feeling

All their fine possibilities, how rich  
And restful even poverty and toil  
Become when beauty, harmony, and love  
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat  
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when  
man 40

Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock  
The symbol of a Christian chivalry  
Tender and just and generous to her  
Who clothes with grace all duty, still, I know  
Too well the picture has another side,—  
How wearily the grind of toil goes on  
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear  
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude  
Of nature, and how hard and colorless  
Is life without an atmosphere I look 50  
Across the lapse of half a century,  
And call to mind old homesteads, where no  
flower

<sup>1</sup> written soon after the close of the Civil War

Told that the spring had come, but evil  
weeds,  
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock in the  
place

Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose  
And honeysuckle, where the house walls  
seemed

Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine  
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves  
Across the curtainless windows, from whose  
panes

Fluttered the signal rags of shiffliness. 60  
Within, the cluttered kitchen floor, unwashed  
(Broom-clean I think they called it); the best  
room

Stuffing with cellar-damp, shut from the air  
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless  
Save the inevitable sampler<sup>1</sup> hung  
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,  
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, be-  
neath

Impossible willows; the wide-throated hearth  
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half con-  
cealing

The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back, 70  
And, in sad keeping with all things about  
them,

Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen  
men,

Untidy, loveless, old before their time,  
With scarce a human interest save their own  
Monotonous round of small economies,  
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;  
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,  
Treading the May-flowers with regardless  
feet;

For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink  
Sang not, nor winds made music in the  
leaves; 80

For them in vain October's holocaust  
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,  
The sacramental mystery of the woods.  
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,  
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,  
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls  
And winter pork with the least possible out-  
lay

Of salt and sanctity; in daily life  
Showing as little actual comprehension

<sup>1</sup> piece of decorative needlework, especially one showing embroidered letters or verses

Of Christian charity and love and duty 90  
 As if the Sermon on the Mount had been  
 Outdated like a last year's almanac:  
 Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled  
     fields,  
 And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,  
 The veriest straggler lumping on his rounds,  
 The sun and air his sole inheritance,  
 Laughed at a poverty that paid its taxes,  
 And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land  
 Where whoso wisely wills and acts may  
     dwell 100

As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,  
 With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to  
     make

His hour of leisure richer than a life  
 Of fourscore to the barons of old time.  
 Our yeoman should be equal to his home  
 Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,  
 A man to match his mountains, not to creep  
 Dwarfed and abased below them. I would  
     fain

In this light way (of which I needs must own  
 With the knife-grinder<sup>1</sup> of whom Canning  
     sings, 110

"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell  
 you!")

Invite the eye to see and heart to feel  
 The beauty and the joy within their reach,—  
 Home, and home loves, and the beauties  
 Of nature free to all. Haply in years  
 That wait to take the places of our own,  
 Heard where some breezy balcony looks  
     down

On happy homes, or where the lake in the  
     moon

Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as  
     Ruth,

In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet 120  
 Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine  
 May seem the burden of a prophecy,  
 Finding its late fulfilment in a change  
 Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up  
 Through broader culture, finer manners, love,  
 And reverence, to the level of the hills.

<sup>1</sup> "The Friend of Humanity and the Knife Grinder," from which the quotation in line 111 was taken, was a parody on one of Southey's poems, written by George Canning.

O Golden Age whose light is of the dawn,  
 And not of sunset, forward, not behind,  
 Flood the new heavens and earth, and with  
     thee bring

All the old virtues, whatsoever things 130  
 Are pure and honest and of good repute,  
 But add thereto whatever bard has sung  
 Or seer has told of when in trance and dream  
 They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy!  
 Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide  
 Between the right and wrong; but give the heart  
 The freedom of its fair inheritance;  
 Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved  
     so long,

At Nature's table feast his ear and eye  
 With joy and wonder, let all harmonies 140  
 Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon  
 The princely guest, whether in soft attire  
 Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,  
 And, lending life to the dead forms of faith,  
 Give human nature reverence for the sake  
 Of One who bore it, making it divine  
 With the ineffable tenderness of God;  
 Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,  
 The hearship of an unknown destiny, 149  
 The unsolved mystery round about us, make  
 A man more precious than the gold of Ophir  
 Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things  
 Should minister, as outward types and signs  
 Of the eternal beauty which fulfils  
 The one great purpose of creation, Love,  
 The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

1867-1868

1868

### THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

The best known of Whittier's religious poems. It contrasts with the old Calvinistic pieces with their "iron creeds." The poem reflects the poet's sense of humility, of the futility of question, his concern with the goodness of God (his favorite doctrine), and the inner peace of his Quaker faith.

O FRIENDS! with whom my feet have trod  
 The quiet aisles of prayer,  
 Glad witness to your zeal for God  
 And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;  
 Your logic linked and strong  
 I weigh as one who dreads dissent,  
 And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak  
To hold your iron creeds: 10  
Against the words ye bid me speak  
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?  
Who talks of scheme and plan?  
The Lord is God! He needeth not  
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground  
Ye tread with boldness shod;  
I dare not fix with mete and bound 20  
The love and power of God.

Ye praise His justice; even such  
His pitying love I deem.  
Ye seek a king, I fain would touch  
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods  
A world of pain and loss,  
I hear our Lord's beatitudes  
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within  
Myself, alas I know: 30  
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,  
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,  
I veil mine eyes for shame,  
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,  
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,  
I feel the guilt within,  
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,  
The world confess its sin 40

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,  
And tossed by storm and flood,  
To one fixed trust my spirit clings,  
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim  
And seraphs may not see,  
But nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below  
I dare not throne above, 50  
I know not of His hate,—I know  
His goodness and His love.

I dimly guess from blessings known  
Of greater out of sight,  
And, with the chastened Psalmist,<sup>1</sup> own  
His judgments too are right.

I long for household voices gone,  
For vanished smiles I long,  
But God hath led my dear ones on,  
And He can do no wrong. 60

I know not what the future hath  
Of marvel or surprise,  
Assured alone that life and death  
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak  
To bear an untried pain,  
The bruised reed He will not break,  
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,  
Nor works my faith to prove; 70  
I can but give the gifts He gave,  
And plead His love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea  
I wait the muffled oar,  
No harm from Him can come to me  
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air,  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care 80

O brothers! if my faith is vain,  
If hopes like these betray,  
Pray for me that my feet may gain  
The sure and safer way

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen  
Thy creatures as they be,  
Forgive me if too close I lean  
My human heart on Thee! 1865 1867

#### IN SCHOOL-DAYS

Another attractive and touching piece, coming  
from Whittier's memories of his rural childhood

Still sits the school-house by the road,  
A ragged beggar sleeping;  
Around it still the sumachs grow,  
And blackberry vines are creeping.

<sup>1</sup> David. See Psalms 19 & 2.

Within, the master's desk is seen,  
 Deep scarred by raps official;  
 The warping floor, the battered seats,  
 The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescoes on its wall,  
 Its door's worn sill, betraying 10  
 The feet that, creeping slow to school,  
 Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun  
 Shone over it at setting;  
 Lit up its western window-panes,  
 And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,  
 And brown eyes full of grieving,  
 Of one who still her steps delayed 20  
 When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy  
 Her childish favor singled:  
 His cap pulled low upon a face  
 Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow  
 To right and left, he lingered,—  
 As restlessly her tiny hands  
 The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes, he felt 30  
 The soft hand's light caressing,  
 And heard the tremble of her voice,  
 As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:  
 I hate to go above you,  
 Because,"—the brown eyes lower fell,—  
 "Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man  
 That sweet child-face is showing  
 Dear girl! the grasses on her grave  
 Have forty years been growing! 40

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,  
 How few who pass above him  
 Lament their triumph and his loss,  
 Like her,—because they love him.

### SUNSET ON THE BEARCAMP

Whittier much admired the scenery on the Bearcamp River near Osauee, New Hampshire. His poem on it blends the descriptive and the subjective. The scene gives him a sense of the presence of Deity in nature and of the endurance of the soul "beyond the years of time." The poem, however, contains no sermon element.

A gold fringe on the purpling hem  
 Of hills the river runs,  
 As down its long, green valley falls  
 The last of summer's suns.  
 Along its tawny gravel-bed  
 Broad-flowing, swift, and still,  
 As if its meadow levels felt  
 The hurry of the hill.  
 Noiseless between its banks of green  
 From curve to curve it slips; 10  
 The drowsy maple-shadows rest  
 Like fringes on its lips.

A waif from Carroll's wildest hills,  
 Unstoried and unknown,  
 The ursine legend of its name  
 Prowls on its banks alone  
 Yet flowers as fair its slopes adorn  
 As ever Yarrow<sup>1</sup> knew,  
 Or, under rany Irish skies,  
 By Spenser's Mulla<sup>2</sup> grew; 20  
 And through the gaps of leaning trees  
 Its mountain cradle shows  
 The gold against the amethyst,  
 The green against the rose.

Touched by a light that hath no name,  
 A glory never sung,  
 Aloft on sky and mountain wall  
 Are God's great pictures hung  
 How changed the summits vast and  
 old  
 No longer granite-browed, 30  
 They melt in rosy mist, the rock  
 Is softer than the cloud,  
 The valley holds its breath, no leaf  
 Of all its elms is twirled,  
 The silence of eternity  
 Seems falling on the world.

<sup>1</sup> Scotch valley and stream celebrated in Wordsworth's poems    <sup>2</sup> Irish river near which Edmund Spenser lived for a time

The pause before the breaking seas  
 Of mystery is this;  
 Yon miracle-play of night and day  
 Makes dumb its witnesses. 40  
 What unseen altar crowns the hills  
 That reach up stair on stair?  
 What eyes look through, what white wings  
 fan  
 These purple veils of air?  
 What Presence from the heavenly heights  
 To those of earth stoops down?  
 Not vainly Hellas dreamed of gods  
 On Ida's snowy crown!

Slow fades the vision of the sky,  
 The golden water pales, 50  
 And over all the valley-land  
 A gray-winged vapor sails  
 I go the common way of all,  
 The sunset fires will burn,  
 The flowers will blow, the river flow,  
 When I no more return  
 No whisper from the mountain pine  
 Nor lapsing stream shall tell  
 The stranger, treading where I tread,  
 Of him who loved them well 60

But beauty seen is never lost,  
 God's colors all are fast,  
 The glory of this sunset heaven  
 Into my soul has passed,  
 A sense of gladness unconfined  
 To mortal date or clime;  
 As the soul liveth, it shall live  
 Beyond the years of time  
 Beside the myrtle asphodels<sup>1</sup>  
 Shall bloom the home-born flowers, 70  
 And new horizons flush and glow  
 With sunset hues of ours

Farewell! these smiling hills must wear  
 Too soon their wintry frown,  
 And snow-cold winds from off them shake  
 The maple's red leaves down  
 But I shall see a summer sun  
 Still setting broad and low;  
 The mountain slopes shall blush and bloom,  
 The golden water flow. 80

<sup>1</sup> In Greek mythology, the meadows of the underworld were covered with these flowers, belonging to the Hyl family

A lover's claim is mine on all  
 I see to have and hold,—  
 The rose-light of perpetual hills,  
 And sunsets never cold!

1876

## THE TRAILING ARBUTUS

This poem follows a familiar pattern in flower poetry. The stanzas concerning the trailing arbutus are followed by a personal passage in which Whittier finds a lesson for himself as he bends over the flower. Bryant also added personal passages in "The Yellow Violet" and "The Fringed Gentian," and the same type of moralizing close may be found in his "To a Waterfowl" and in Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith."

I WANDERED lonely where the pine-trees made  
 Against the bitter East their barricade,  
 And, guided by its sweet  
 Perfume, I found, within a narrow dell,  
 The trailing spring flower tinted like a shell  
 Amid dry leaves and mosses at my feet.

From under dead boughs, for whose loss the  
 pines  
 Moaned ceaseless overhead, the blossoming  
 vines  
 Lifted their glad surprise,  
 While yet the bluebird smoothed in leafless  
 trees 10  
 His feathers ruffled by the chill sea-breeze,  
 And snow-drifts lingered under April skies.

As, pausing o'er the lonely flower I bent,  
 I thought of lives thus lowly, clogged and  
 pent,  
 Which yet find room,  
 Through care and cumber, coldness and decay,  
 To lend a sweetness to the ungenial day,  
 And make the sad earth happier for their  
 bloom

1879

## THE LOST OCCASION

See the headnote for "Ichabod" on page 711

SOME die too late and some too soon,  
 At early morning, heat of noon,  
 Or the chill evening twilight. Thou,  
 Whom the rich heavens did so endow  
 With eyes of power and Jove's own brow,



With all the massive strength that fills  
 Thy home-horizon's granite hills,  
 With rarest gifts of heart and head  
 From manliest stock inherited,  
 New England's stateliest type of man, 10  
 In port and speech Olympian;  
 Whom no one met, at first, but took  
 A second awed and wondering look  
 (As turned, perchance the eyes of Greece  
 On Phidias' unveiled masterpiece<sup>1</sup>);  
 Whose words in simplest homespun clad,  
 The Saxon strength of Caedmon's had,  
 With power reserved at need to reach  
 The Roman forum's loftiest speech,  
 Sweet with persuasion, eloquent 20  
 In passion, cool in argument,  
 Or, ponderous, falling on thy foes  
 As fell the Norse god's hammer blows,  
 Crushing as if with Talus' flail  
 Through Error's logic-woven mail,  
 And failing only when they tried  
 The adamant of the righteous side,—  
 Thou, foiled in aim and hope, bereaved  
 Of old friends, by the new deceived,  
 Too soon for us, too soon for thee, 30  
 Beside thy lonely Northern sea,  
 Where long and low the marsh-lands spread,  
 Laid wearily down thy august head.

Thou shouldst have lived to feel below  
 Thy feet Disunion's fierce upthrow;  
 The late-sprung mine that underlaid  
 Thy sad concessions vainly made.  
 Thou shouldst have seen from Sumter's wall  
 The star-flag of the Union fall,  
 And armed rebellion pressing on 40  
 The broken lines of Washington!  
 No stronger voice than thine had then  
 Called out the utmost might of men,  
 To make the Union's charter free

<sup>1</sup> the colossal statue of Jove at Olympia "unveiled" because all trace of it has been lost except some inscriptions on Greek coins

And strengthen law by liberty.  
 How had that stern arbitrament  
 To thy gray age youth's vigor lent,  
 Shaming ambition's paltry prize  
 Before thy disillusioned eyes;  
 Breaking the spell about thee wound 50  
 Like the green withes that Samson bound;  
 Redeeming in one effort grand,  
 Thyself and thy imperiled land!  
 Ah, cruel fate, that closed to thee,  
 O sleeper by the Northern sea,  
 The gates of opportunity!  
 God fills the gaps of human need,  
 Each crisis brings its word and deed.  
 Wise men and strong we did not lack,  
 But still, with memory turning back, 60  
 In the dark hours we thought of thee,  
 And thy lone grave beside the sea.

Above that grave the east winds blow,  
 And from the marsh-lands drifting slow  
 The sea-fog comes, with evermore  
 The wave-wash of a lonely shore,  
 And sea-bird's melancholy cry,  
 As Nature fain would typify  
 The sadness of a closing scene,  
 The loss of that which should have been. 70  
 But, where thy native mountains bare  
 Their foreheads to diviner air,  
 Fit emblem of enduring fame,  
 One lofty summit keeps thy name.  
 For thee the cosmic forces did  
 The rearing of that pyramid,  
 The prescient ages shaping with  
 Fire, flood, and frost thy monolith.  
 Sunrise and sunset lay thereon  
 With hands of light their benison, 80  
 The stars of midnight pause to set  
 Their jewels in its coronet.  
 And evermore that mountain mass  
 Seems climbing from the shadowy pass  
 To light, as if to manifest  
 Thy nobler self, thy life at best!

## WHAT IS SLAVERY?

ADDRESSED TO THE LIBERTY PARTY  
CONVENTION AT NEW BEDFORD,  
IN SEPTEMBER, 1843

An editor and contributor to newspapers and periodicals for many years, Whittier wrote more prose than verse during his lifetime. His prose, like Bryant's, has been rather neglected. Most of it was written for propaganda in the cause of freedom. He also wrote essays. Often they concerned literary and religious figures, some of them minor. Among his subjects were John Bunyan, Richard Baxter, and the Quaker worthies, James Nayler, John Roberts, Andrew Marvell, Thomas Ellwood. His most ambitious prose work was the fictional *Margaret Smith's Journal in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, 1678-9*. Whittier's prose style is not literary, but it is clear, straightforward, readable, and suited to its purposes.

I HAVE just received your kind invitation to attend the meeting of the Liberty Party in New Bedford on the 2nd of next month. Believe me, it is with no ordinary feelings of regret that I find myself under the necessity of foregoing the pleasure of meeting with you on that occasion. But I need not say to you, and through you to the convention, that you have my hearty sympathy.

I am with the Liberty Party because it is the only party in the country which is striving openly and honestly to reduce to practice the great truths which lie at the foundation of our republic: all men created equal, endowed with rights inalienable; the security of these rights the only just object of government; the right of the people to alter or modify government until this great object is attained. Precious and glorious truths! Sacred in the sight of their Divine Author, grateful and beneficent to suffering humanity, essential elements of that ultimate and universal government of which God is laying the strong and wide foundations, turning and overturning, until He whose right it is shall rule. The voice which calls upon us to sustain them is the voice of God. In the eloquent language of the lamented Myron Holley, the man who first lifted up the standard of the Liberty Party: "He calls upon us to sustain these truths in the recorded voice of the holy of ancient times. He calls us to sustain them in the sound as of

many waters and mighty thunderings rising from the fields of Europe, converted into one vast Acedama by the exertions of despots to suppress them; in the persuasive history of the best thoughts and boldest deeds of all our brave, self-sacrificing ancestors; in the tender, heart-reaching whispers of our children, preparing to suffer or enjoy the future, as we leave it for them; in the broken and disordered but moving accents of half our race yet groping in darkness and galled by the chains of bondage. He calls upon us to sustain them by the solemn and considerate use of all the powers with which He has invested us." In a time of almost universal political scepticism, in the midst of a pervading and growing unbelief in the great principles enunciated in the revolutionary declaration, the Liberty Party has dared to avow its belief in these truths, and to carry them into action as far as it has the power. It is a protest against the political infidelity of the day, a recurrence to first principles, a summons once more to that deserted altar upon which our fathers laid their offerings.

It may be asked why it is that a party resting upon such broad principles is directing its exclusive exertions against slavery. "Are there not other great interests?" ask all manner of Whig and Democrat editors and politicians. "Consider, for instance," say the Democrats, "the mighty question which is agitating us, whether a 'Northern man with Southern principles' or a Southern man with the principles of a Nero or Caligula shall be President." "Or look at us," say the Whigs, "deprived of our inalienable right to office by this Tyler-Calhoun administration. And be-think you, gentlemen, how could your Liberty Party do better than to vote with us for a man who, if he does hold some three-score of slaves, and maintain that 'two hundred years of legislation has sanctioned and sanctified negro slavery,' is, at the same time, the champion of Greek liberty, and Polish liberty, and South American liberty, and, in short, of all sorts of liberties, save liberty at home."

Yes, friends, we have considered all this, and more, namely, that one sixth part of our entire population are slaves, and that you,

with your sub-treasuries and national banks, propose no relief for them. Nay, farther, it is because both of you, when in power, have used your authority to rivet closer the chains of unhappy millions, that we have been compelled to abandon you, and form a liberty party having for its first object the breaking of these chains.

What is slavery? For upon the answer to this question must the Liberty Party depend for its justification.

The slave laws of the South tell us that it is the conversion of men into articles of property; the transformation of sentient immortal beings into "chattels personal." The principle of a reciprocity of benefits, which to some extent characterizes all other relations, does not exist in that of master and slave. The master holds the plough which turns the soil of his plantation, the horse which draws it, and the slave who guides it by one and the same tenure. The profit of the master is the great end of the slave's existence. For this end he is fed, clothed, and prescribed for in sickness. He learns nothing, acquires nothing, for himself. He cannot use his own body for his own benefit. His very personality is destroyed. He is a mere instrument, a means in the hands of another for the accomplishment of an end in which his own interests are not regarded, a machine moved not by his own will, but by another's. In him the awful distinction between a person and a thing is annulated: he is thrust down from the place which God and Nature assigned him, from the equal companionship of rational intelligences,—a man herded with beasts, an immortal nature classed with the wares of the merchant!

The relations of parent and child, master and apprentice, government and subject, are based upon the principle of benevolence, reciprocal benefits, and the wants of human society; relations which sacredly respect the rights and legacies which God has given to all His rational creatures. But slavery exists only by annihilating or monopolizing these rights and legacies. In every other modification of society, man's personal ownership remains secure. He may be oppressed, deprived of privileges, loaded with burdens,

hemmed about with legal disabilities, his liberties restrained. But, through all, the right to his own body and soul remains inviolate. He retains his inherent, original possession of himself. Even crime cannot forfeit it, for that law which destroys his personality makes void its own claims upon him as a moral agent, and the power to punish ceases with the accountability of the criminal. He may suffer and die under the penalties of the law, but he suffers as a man, he perishes as a man, and not as a thing. To the last moments of his existence the rights of a moral agent are his; they go with him to the grave; they constitute the ground of his accountability at the bar of infinite justice,—rights fixed, eternal, inseparable, attributes of all rational intelligence in time and eternity; the same in essence, and differing in degree only, with those of the highest moral being, of God himself.

Slavery alone lays its grasp upon the right of personal ownership, that foundation right, the removal of which uncreates the man, a right which God himself could not take away without absolving the being thus deprived of all moral accountability, and so far as that being is concerned, making sin and holiness, crime and virtue, words without significance, and the promises and sanctions of revelation, dreams. Hence, the crowning horror of slavery, that which lifts it above all other iniquities, is not that it usurps the prerogatives of Deity, but that it attempts that which even He who has said, "All souls are mine," cannot do, without breaking up the foundations of His moral government. Slavery is, in fact, a struggle with the Almighty for dominion over His rational creatures. It is leagued with the powers of darkness, in wresting man from his Maker. It is blasphemy lifting brazen brow and violent hand to heaven, attempting a reversal of God's laws. Man claiming the right to uncreate his brother, to undo that last and most glorious work, which God himself pronounced good, amidst the rejoicing hosts of heaven! Man arrogating to himself the right to change, for his own selfish purposes, the beautiful order of created existences; to pluck the crown of an immortal nature, scarce lower than that of the angels, from the brow of his brother, to erase the

God-like image and superscription stamped upon him by the hand of his Creator, and to write on the despoiled and desecrated tablet, "A chattel personal!"

Thus, then, is slavery. Nature, with her thousand voices, cries out against it. Against it, divine revelation launches its thunders. The voice of God condemns it in the deep places of the human heart. The woes and wrongs unutterable which attend this dreadful violation of natural justice, the stripes, the tortures, the Sunderings of kindred, the desolation of human affections, the unchastity and lust, the toil uncompensated, the abrogated marriage, the legalized heathenism, the burial of the mind, are but the mere incidentals of the first grand outrage, that seizure of the entire man, nerve, sinew, and spirit, which robs him of his body, and God of his soul. These are but the natural results and outward demonstrations of slavery, the crystallizations from the chattel principle.

It is against this system, in its active operation upon three millions of our countrymen, that the Liberty Party, is, for the present, directing all its efforts. With such an object well may we be "men of one idea." Nor do we neglect "other great interests," for all are colored and controlled by slavery, and the removal of this disastrous influence would most effectually benefit them.

Political action is the result and immediate object of moral suasion on this subject. Action, action, is the spirit's means of progress, its sole test of rectitude, its only source of happiness. And should not decided action follow our deep convictions of the wrong of slavery? Shall we denounce the slaveholders of the states, while we retain our slavery in the District of Columbia? Shall we pray that the God of the oppressed will turn the hearts of "the rulers" in South Carolina, while we, the rulers of the District, refuse to open the prisons and break up the slave-markets on its ten miles square? God keep us from such hypocrisy! Everybody now professes to be opposed to slavery. The leaders of the two great political parties are grievously concerned lest the purity of the antislavery enterprise

will suffer in its connection with politics. In the midst of the grossest pro-slavery action, they are full of antislavery sentiment. They love the cause, but, on the whole, think it too good for this world. They would keep it sublimated, aloft, out of vulgar reach or use altogether, intangible as Magellan's clouds. Everybody will join us in denouncing slavery, in the abstract, not a faithless priest nor politician will oppose us; abandon action, and forsooth we can have an abolition millennium; the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, while slavery in practice clanks, in derision, its three millions of unbroken chains. Our opponents have no fear of the harmless spectre of an abstract idea. They dread it only when it puts on the flesh and sinews of a practical reality, and lifts its right arm in the strength which God giveth to do as well as theorize.

As honest men, then, we must needs act; let us do so as becomes men engaged in a great and solemn cause. Not by processions and idle parades and spasmodic enthusiasms, by shallow tricks and shows and artifices, can a cause like ours be carried onward. Leave these to parties contending for office, as the "spoils of victory." We need no disguises, nor false pretences, nor subterfuges, enough for us to present before our fellow-countrymen the holy truths of freedom, in their unadorned and native beauty. Dark as the present may seem, let us remember with hearty confidence that truth and right are destined to triumph. Let us blot out the word "discouragement" from the antislavery vocabulary. Let the enemies of freedom be discouraged; let the advocates of oppression despair, but let those who grapple with wrong and falsehood, in the name of God and in the power of His truth, take courage. Slavery must die. The Lord hath spoken it. The vials of His hot displeasure, like those which chastised the nations in the Apocalyptic vision, are smoking even now, above its "habitations of cruelty." It can no longer be borne with by Heaven. Universal humanity cries out against it. Let us work, then, to hasten its downfall, doing whatsoever our hands find to do, "with all our might."

*October, 1843*

1817 ~ *Henry David Thoreau* ~ 1862

THOREAU, the most individual of the transcendental group, came into recognition late, but permanently. He put into practice many of the ideas that Emerson preached. He preferred the simple life, questioned the desirability of wealth, and devoted himself to a search for the satisfying existence. He was a philosopher, with the naturalist's love of the open air, was something of a mystic, and had the Yankee's practical skill. He preceded William Morris and Ruskin in attacking industrial exploitation. Like them, he thought that "the only wealth is life."

Thoreau was the only one of the "Concord group" to be born there. His father was a pencil maker, son of a Boston merchant who had emigrated from the island of Jersey. Thoreau was graduated at Harvard at the age of twenty in 1837. As a student he was not always tractable. He neglected studies he found unattractive, cared nothing for honors, and declared his diploma not worth the five dollars paid for it. For a few years he taught school, and at times in later years he lectured. But throughout his life he preferred to support himself mainly by the labor of his hands. He was an expert pencil maker, a carpenter, and an excellent surveyor. By the intermittent exercise of these employments as well as farm work, day labor, making gardens, and odd jobs such as whitewashing and building fences, he earned enough to supply his simple wants and those of the relatives at times dependent on him. Mostly he followed his own inclinations.

He was associated with the little band of transcendentalists, especially Emerson, at whose house he lived (1841-1843) as tutor and gardener and whom he helped to edit *The Dial*. Though most persons thought him an imitator of Emerson, his mother thought the imitation the other way round, and it may be that Emerson's interest in nature and his nature lore came partly from Thoreau. Emerson, however, cultivated nature for its spiritual values while Thoreau liked it for its own sake. Much of his time was spent in the open air alone. He made himself thoroughly familiar with the woods, fields, and waters about his native place, and made longer journeys on several occasions to Cape Cod, the Maine woods, Minnesota, and Canada. He recorded his experiences and observations in his journals. His ruling passions—love of simplicity and independence and his love of nature—perhaps found completest expression when he spent more than two years in a little hut which he built in 1845 at Walden Pond near Concord, tilling a small plot of ground and depending for sustenance and enjoyment almost entirely on his own resources. Here he sought to demonstrate simple living and to get at elementary conditions. Although he was a man whose personal views and traits were carried

out to the point of eccentricity, he was hardly a thoroughgoing hermit or recluse in these years, for he still met his friends at Walden, stayed for short periods at his mother's home, delivered occasional lectures, and heard other lectures at Concord. His life was blameless; he was honest, fearless, and original, and he was loved and respected by those who knew him. When but forty-five, he died of tuberculosis, as had his father and his brother.

Thoreau lived out Emerson's doctrines of nonconformity and self-reliance. He condemned the complex machinery of society and thought overmuch civilization a mistake. He prided himself on being a "mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher." He took an antislavery stand when this was unpopular, championed John Brown as a hero, and would not pay his poll tax for the reason that it was used for the support of a government that countenanced war and slavery. He never voted, and he explained his political views in an essay on the duty of civil disobedience. His was transcendental individualism applied to government. Though turning against organized society, he was no communist, for he wished to foster not the masses but extreme individualism. He wanted to be governed neither by the majority nor the minority. His contemporaries refused to take him seriously, but his popularity has increased steadily since his death. The nature school, rising at the end of the century, turned to him as original and stimulating, and they, rather than the reformers, contributed to new interest in his life and his work.

Like Emerson and Carlyle, Thoreau distinguished between "two kinds" of writings, "one of genius, or the inspired, the other of intellect and taste, in the intervals of inspiration." He regarded expression as organic with thought and character; form would take care of itself. He paid great tribute to experience and action as giving vitality to style. "Steady labor with the hands . . . is unquestionably the best method of removing palaver and sentimentality out of one's style, both of speaking and writing." He valued "plainness, and vigor, and sincerity." "A sentence should read as if its author, had he held a plow instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end." However, much as he was indebted to experience and nature, he insisted that they could be transmuted into literature only by being refracted through a sensitive mind and winnowed by retrospection and introspection. In all things he prided himself upon a sharp individuality.

The writings of Thoreau have a charm derived partly from the subject matter, but largely from his individual prose style. To his nature descriptions he brings a clarity of expression as well as a naturalist's care in observation; to his philosophical discussions, shrewdness and bits of humor. Although not given to making aphorisms as was Emerson, he makes occasional terse statements which, in their epigrammatic nature, resemble those of his friend. Momentarily, because of the independence of his thinking, his expression may become too subtle, but in the main he writes simply and lucidly. He revised his journals painstakingly and worked over his sentences with

the case of a craftsman; yet there are few signs of labor in his style, which throughout many volumes keeps its quality of freshness and originality.

Thoreau's chief works published in his lifetime are *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), a miscellany of essays, poems, and papers, translations from the classics, philosophy and nature notes, and *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (1854). *Excursions* (1863), *The Maine Woods* (1864), and *Cape Cod* (1865) appeared after his death. He contributed verse to *The Dial*. *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau* (10 vols., Riverside Edition) appeared in 1894. The body of his writing is now available in his *Collected Works*, Manuscript Edition, and (issued without the manuscript insertions) the standard Walden Edition (20 vols., 1906). These contain also his letters and journals. *The Heart of Thoreau's Journals* (1927) was edited by Odell Shepherd. Various minor omissions from the Walden Edition have been edited by F. B. Sanborn (1902, 1905, 1909) and others.

Articles of interest on Thoreau are by Emerson, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, X, August, 1862; by Lowell, in *My Study Windows* (1871), and by John Burroughs, in *Indoor Studies* (1889). See also Archibald MacMechan, in *CHAL*, II (1918), Norman Foerster, in *Nature in American Literature* (1923); V. L. Parrington, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, II (1927), H. S. Canby, in *Classic Americans* (1931), and Canby and Adams in *DAB*, XVIII (1936). André Bruel wrote *Emerson et Thoreau* (1929), and R. W. Adams discussed "Thoreau's Literary Apprenticeship," *Studies in Philology*, XXIX, October, 1932. A good general introduction is supplied in B. V. Crawford's *Thoreau*, in American Writers Series (1934).

Books concerning Thoreau are a life by H. S. Salt, in Great Writers Series (1890, 1896), F. S. Sanborn's *Thoreau*, in the American Men of Letters Series (1882, 1910), and his *The Life of Henry D. Thoreau* (1917). See also Mark Van Doren's *Henry David Thoreau, a Critical Study* (1916); Léon Balzac's fictionalized biography, *Henry Thoreau, Bachelor of Nature* (1924), and F. B. Atkinson's *Henry D. Thoreau, the Cosmic Yankee* (1927).

A good bibliography of Thoreau is that of Francis H. Allen, *A Bibliography of Henry David Thoreau* (1908). See also the bibliography by Mark Van Doren in *CHAL*, II (1918), and by Harry Hartwick in W. F. Taylor's *A History of American Letters* (1936).

### SMOKE

Thoreau, like Emerson, thought of himself as a poet, but his verse does not bulk large, the execution is uneven, and the lyrical quality not striking. Usually he treats abstract subjects or subjects from nature.

LIGHT-WINGED smoke, Icarian<sup>1</sup> bird,  
Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,  
Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,  
Circling above the hamlets as thy nest,  
Or else, departing dream, and shadowy form  
Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts,  
By night star-veiling, and by day

7

<sup>1</sup> In Greek myth Daedalus and his son Icarus escaped from the labyrinth in Crete by means of artificial wings. Icarus flew too near the sun, the wax in his wings melted, and he was drowned in the sea named thereafter Icarian. This poem is antecedent to and suggestive of later imagist poems.

Darkening the light and blotting out the sun,  
Go thou my incense upward from this hearth,  
And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame

1843

### HAZE

Woof of the sun, ethereal gauze,  
Woven of Nature's richest stuffs,  
Visible heat, air-water, and dry sea,  
Last conquest of the eye,  
Toil of the day displayed, sun-dust,  
Aerial surf upon the shores of earth,  
Ethereal estuary, frith of light,  
Breakers of air, billows of heat,  
Fine summer spray on inland seas;  
Bird of the sun, transparent-winged,  
Owlet of noon, soft-pinioned,  
From heath or stubble rising without song,—  
Establish thy serenity o'er the fields.

10

1849

## INDEPENDENCE

My life more civil is and free  
Than any civil polity.

Ye princes, keep your realms  
And circumscribed power,  
Not wide as are my dreams,  
Nor rich as is this hour

What can ye give which I have not?  
What can ye take which I have got?  
Can ye defend the dangerless?  
Can ye inherit nakedness?

To all true wants Time's ear is deaf,  
Penurious States lend no relief  
Out of their pelf:  
But a free soul—thank God—  
Can help itself.

Be sure your fate  
Doth keep apart its state,—  
Not linked with any band,  
Even the noblest in the land,—

In tented fields with cloth of gold 20  
No place doth hold,  
But is more chivalrous than they are,  
And sigheth for a nobler war;  
A finer strain its trumpet rings,  
A brighter gleam its armor flings.

The life that I aspire to live,  
No man proposeth me;  
No trade upon the street  
Wears its emblazonry.

1841

1863

## From WALDEN

*Walden* sets forth Thoreau's characteristic social ideas and records his experiences as a recluse. It is his most famous work. The original manuscript was destroyed, but a second manuscript was recovered by F. B. Sanborn, near the end of the century, and edited in 1909. It contains more material than the 1854 edition, apparently the earlier manuscript was cut down when printed. Sanborn showed, further, that Thoreau transferred extracts from his journals, 1838-54, into *Walden*, a work supposed to record his life in the years 1845-47. *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) and *Walden* (1854) are the only books published by Thoreau in his lifetime.

## Economy

WHEN I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house 20 which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some 30

would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat, if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid, and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted, in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives, some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my readers,



they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may do good service to him whom it fits.

I would fain say something, not so much concerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders, as you who read these pages, who are said to live in New England; something about your condition, especially your outward condition or circumstances in this world, in this town, what it is, whether it is necessary that it be as bad as it is, whether it cannot be improved as well as not. I have traveled a good deal in Concord; and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Brahmins sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging suspended, with their heads downward, over flames, or looking at the heavens over their shoulders "until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach"; or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree, or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars,—even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness. The twelve labors<sup>1</sup> of Hercules were trifling in comparison with those which my neighbors have undertaken; for they were only twelve, and had an end; but I could never see that these men slew or captured any monster or finished any labor. They have no friend Iolas<sup>2</sup> to burn with a hot iron the root of the hydra's head, but as soon as one head is crushed, two spring up.

I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen

<sup>1</sup> In the classical myth, these involved desperate undertakings, such as slaying the Nemean lion, the Hydra, and a water serpent, and cleansing the Augean stables in which 3000 oxen had been stabled for thirty years. Hercules turned the rivers Alpheus and Peneus through the stables and cleaned them in a day. <sup>2</sup> the friend, companion, sometimes the charioteer of Hercules

with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in. Who made them serfs of the soil? Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born? They have got to live a man's life, pushing all these things before them, and get on as well as they can. How many a poor immortal soul have I met well nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land tillage, mowing, pasture, and woodlot! The portionless, who struggle with no such unnecessary inherited encumbrances, find it labor enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh. . .

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall arrowy white pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is difficult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it is the most generous course thus to permit your fellow-men to have an interest in your enterprise. The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on it, said that it was the apple of his eye, but I returned it sharper than I received it. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond, and a small open field in the woods where pines and hickories were springing up. The ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though there were some open spaces, and it was all dark colored and saturated with water. There were some slight flurries of snow during the days that I worked there, but for the most part when I came out on to the railroad, on my way home, its yellow sand heap stretched away gleaming in the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the spring sun, and I heard the lark and pewee and other birds already come to commence another year with us. They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of man's discontent<sup>1</sup> was thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had lain torpid began to stretch itself. One day, when my

<sup>1</sup> Richard III, I, 1

axe had come off and I had cut a green hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone, and had placed the whole to soak in a pond hole in order to swell the wood, I saw a striped snake run into the water, and he lay on the bottom, apparently without inconvenience, as long as I stayed there, or more than a quarter of an hour; perhaps because he had not yet fairly come out of the torpid state. It appeared to me that for a like reason men remain in their present low and primitive condition, but if they should feel the influence of the spring of springs arousing them, they would of necessity rise to a higher and more ethereal life. I had previously seen the snakes in frosty mornings in my path with portions of their bodies still numb and inflexible, waiting for the sun to thaw them. On the 1st of April it rained and melted the ice, and in the early part of the day, which was very foggy, I heard a stray goose groping about over the pond and cackling as if lost, or like the spirit of the fog.

So I went on for some days cutting and hewing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with my narrow axe, not having many communicable or scholar-like thoughts, singing to myself,—

Men say they know many things;  
But lo! they have taken wings,—  
The arts and sciences,  
And a thousand appliances;  
The wind that blows  
Is all that anybody knows.

I hewed the main timbers six inches square, most of the studs on two sides only, and the rafters and floor timbers on one side, leaving the rest of the bark on, so that they were just as straight and much stronger than sawed ones. Each stuck was carefully mortised or tenoned by its stump, for I had borrowed other tools by this time. My days in the woods were not very long ones; yet I usually carried my dinner of bread and butter, and read the newspaper in which it was wrapped, at noon, sitting amid the green pine boughs which I had cut off, and to my bread was unpurged some of their fragrance, for my hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, though I had cut down some of them, having become better acquainted with

it. Sometimes a rambler in the wood was attracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted pleasantly over the chips which I had made.

By the middle of April, for I made no haste in my work, but rather made the most of it, my house was framed and ready for the raising. I had already bought the shanty of James Collins, an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg Railroad, for boards. James Collins' shanty was considered an uncommonly fine one. When I called to see it he was not at home. I walked about the outside, at first unobserved from within, the window was so deep and high. It was of small dimensions, with a peaked cottage roof, and not much else to be seen, the dirt being raised five feet all around as if it were a compost heap. The roof was the soundest part, though a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun. Doorsill there was none, but a perennial passage for the hens under the door board. Mrs. C. came to the door and asked me to view it from the inside. The hens were driven in by my approach. It was dark, and had a dirt floor for the most part, dank, clammy, and aguish, only here a board and there a board which would not bear removal. She lighted a lamp to show me the inside of the roof and the walls, and also that the board floor extended under the bed, warning me not to step into the cellar, a sort of dust hole two feet deep. In her own words, they were "good boards overhead, good boards all around, and a good window,"—of two whole squares originally, only the cat had passed out that way lately. There was a stove, a bed, and a place to sit, an infant in the house where it was born, a silk parasol, gilt-framed looking-glass, and a patent new coffeemill nailed to an oak sapling, all told. The bargain was soon concluded, for James had in the meanwhile returned. I to pay four dollars and twenty-five cents tonight, he to vacate at five tomorrow morning, selling to nobody else meanwhile: I to take possession at six. It were well, he said, to be there early, and anticipate certain indistinct but wholly unjust claims on the score of ground rent and fuel. This he assured me was the only encumbrance. At six I passed him and his family on the road. One large bundle held their all,—bed, coffeemill, look-

ing-glass, hens,—all but the cat; she took to the woods and became a wild cat, and, as I learned afterward, trod in a trap set for woodchucks, and so became a dead cat at last.

I took down this dwelling the same morning, drawing the nails, and removed it to the pond side by small cartloads, spreading the boards on the grass there to bleach and warp back again in the sun. One early thrush gave me a note or two as I drove along the woodland path. I was informed treacherously by a young Patrick that neighbor Sealey, an Irishman, in the intervals of the carting, transferred the still tolerable straight, and drivable nails, staples, and spikes to his pocket, and then stood when I came back to pass the time of day, and look freshly up, unconcerned, with spring thoughts, at the devastation; there being a dearth of work, as he said. He was there to represent spectatordom, and help make this seemingly insignificant event one with the removal of the gods of Troy.<sup>1</sup>

I dug my cellar in the side of a hill sloping to the south, where a woodchuck had formerly dug his burrow, down through sumach and blackberry roots, and the lowest stain of vegetation, six feet square by seven deep, to a fine sand where potatoes would not freeze in any winter. The sides were left shelving, and not stoned; but the sun having never shone on them, the sand still keeps its place. It was but two hours' work. I took particular pleasure in this breaking of ground, for in almost all latitudes men dig into the earth for an equable temperature. Under the most splendid house in the city is still to be found the cellar where they store their roots as of old, and long after the superstructure has disappeared posterity remark its dent in the earth. The house is still but a sort of porch at the entrance of a burrow.

At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances,<sup>2</sup> rather to improve so good an occasion for neighborliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house. No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I. They are destined, I trust, to assist at the rais-

ing of loftier structures one day. I began to occupy my house on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and roofed, for the boards were carefully feathered and lapped, so that it was perfectly impervious to rain; but before boarding I laid the foundation of a chimney at one end, bringing two cartloads of stones up the hill from the pond in my arms. I built the chimney after my hoeing in the fall, before a fire became necessary for warmth, doing my cooking in the meanwhile out of doors on the ground, early in the morning; which mode I still think is in some respects more convenient and agreeable than the usual one. When it stormed before my bread was baked, I fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant hours in that way. In those days, when my hands were much employed, I read but little, but the least scraps of paper which lay on the ground, my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much entertainment, in fact answered the same purpose as the *Iliad*. . . .

Before winter I built a chimney, and shingled the sides of my house, which were already impervious to rain, with imperfect and sappy shingles made of the first slice of the log, whose edges I was obliged to straighten with a plane.

I have thus a tight shingled and plastered house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight-foot posts, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap doors, one door at the end, and a brick fireplace opposite. The exact cost of my house, paying the usual price for such materials as I used, but not counting the work, all of which was done by myself, was as follows, and I give the details because very few are able to tell exactly what their houses cost, and fewer still, if any, the separate cost of the various materials which compose them:—

Boards	\$8.03½, mostly shanty boards.
Refuse shingles for roof and sides	4.00
Laths	1.25
Two second-hand windows with glass	2.43

<sup>1</sup> Virgil's *Aeneid*, II, 243-311. <sup>2</sup> Among these were Emerson, Ellery Channing, Bronson Alcott, and George William Curtis, then a Harvard student.

One thousand old brick	4.00	
Two casks of lime	2.40	That was high.
Hair	.31	More than I needed.
Mantle-tree iron	.15	
Nails	3.90	
Hinges and screws	.14	
Latch	.10	
Chalk	.01	
Transporta- tion	1.40	I carried a good part on my back.
In all	<u>\$28.12½</u>	

These are all the materials excepting the timber, stones, and sand, which I claimed by squatter's right. I have also a small woodshed adjoining, made chiefly of the stuff which was left after building the house

I intend to build me a house which will surpass any on the main street in Concord in grandeur and luxury, as soon as it pleases me as much and will cost me no more than my present one.

I thus found that the student who wishes for a shelter can obtain one for a lifetime at an expense not greater than the rent which he now pays annually. If I seem to boast more than is becoming, my excuse is that I brag for humanity rather than for myself, and my shortcomings and inconsistencies do not affect the truth of my statement. Notwithstanding much cant and hypocrisy,—chaff which I find it difficult to separate from my wheat, but for which I am as sorry as any man,—I will breathe freely and stretch myself in this respect, it is such a relief to both the moral and physical system; and I am resolved that I will not through humility become the devil's attorney. I will endeavor to speak a good word for the truth. At Cambridge College the mere rent of a student's room, which is only a little larger than my own, is thirty dollars each year, though the corporation had the advantage of building thirty-two side by side and under one roof, and the occupant suffers the inconvenience of many and noisy neighbors, and perhaps a residence in the fourth story. I cannot but think that if we had more true wisdom in these respects, not only less educa-

dion would be needed, because, forsooth, more would already have been acquired, but the pecuniary expense of getting an education would in a great measure vanish. Those conveniences which the student requires at Cambridge or elsewhere cost him or somebody else ten times as great a sacrifice of life as they would with proper management on both sides. Those things for which the most money is demanded are never the things which the student most wants. Tuition, for instance, is an important item in the term bill, while for the far more valuable education which he gets by associating with the most cultivated of his contemporaries no charge is made. The mode of founding a college is, commonly, to get up a subscription of dollars and cents, and then following blindly the principles of a division of labor to its extreme, a principle which should never be followed but with circumspection,—to call in a contractor who makes thus a subject of speculation, and he employs Irishmen or other operatives actually to lay the foundations, while the students that are to be are said to be fitting themselves for it; and for these oversights successive generations have to pay. I think that it would be *better than this*, for the students, or those who desire to be benefited by it, even to lay the foundation themselves. The student who secures his coveted leisure and retirement by systematically shirking any labor necessary to man obtains but an ignoble and unprofitable leisure, defrauding himself of the experience which alone can make leisure fruitful. "But," says one, "you do not mean that the students should go to work with their hands instead of their heads?" I do not mean that exactly, but I mean something which he might think a good deal like that, I mean that they should not *play* life, or *study* it merely, while the community supports them at this expensive game, but earnestly *live* it from beginning to end. How could youths better learn to live than by at once trying the experiment of living? Methinks this would exercise their minds as much as mathematics. If I wished a boy to know something about the arts and sciences, for instance, I would not pursue the common course, which is merely to send him into the neighborhood of some professor,

where anything is professed and practiced but the art of life;—to survey the world through a telescope or a microscope, and never with his natural eye; to study chemistry, and not learn how his bread is made, or mechanics, and not learn how it is earned; to discover new satellites to Neptune, and not detect the moles in his eyes, or to what vagabond he is a satellite himself, or to be devoured by the monsters that swarm all around him, while contemplating the monsters in a drop of vinegar. Which would have advanced the most at the end of a month,—the boy who had made his own jack-knife from the ore which he had dug and smelted, reading as much as would be necessary for this,—or the boy who had attended the lectures on metallurgy at the Institute in the meanwhile, and had received a Rogers' penknife from his father? Which would be most likely to cut his fingers? . . . To my astonishment I was informed on leaving college that I had studied navigation!—why, if I had taken one turn down the harbor I should have known more about it. Even the *poor* student studies and is taught only *political* economy, while that economy of living which is synonymous with philosophy is not even sincerely professed in our colleges. The consequence is that while he is reading Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Say, he runs his father in debt irremediably. . . .

Before I finished my house, wishing to earn ten or twelve dollars by some honest and agreeable method, in order to meet my unusual expenses, I planted about two acres and a half of light and sandy soil near it chiefly with beans, but also a small part with potatoes, corn, peas, and turnips. The whole lot contains eleven acres, mostly growing up to pines and hickories, and was sold the preceding season for eight dollars and eight cents an acre. One farmer said that it was "good for nothing but to raise cheeping squirrels on." I put no manure whatever on this land, not being the owner, but merely a squatter, and not expecting to cultivate so much again, and I did not quite hoe it all once. I got out several cords of stumps in plowing, which supplied me with fuel for a long time, and left small circles of virgin mold, easily distinguishable

through the summer by the greater luxuriance of the beans there. The dead and for the most part unmerchantable wood behind my house, and the driftwood from the pond, have supplied the remainder of my fuel. I was obliged to hire a team and a man for the plowing, though I held the plow myself. My farm outgoes for the first season were, for implements, seed, work, etc., \$14.72½. The seed corn was given me. This never costs anything to speak of, unless you plant more than enough. I got twelve bushels of beans, and eighteen bushels of potatoes, besides some peas and sweet corn. The yellow corn and turnips were too late to come to anything. My whole income from the farm was

	\$23 44
Deducting the outgoes	14 72½
There are left	\$ 8 71½

besides produce consumed and on hand at the time this estimate was made of the value of \$4 50,—the amount on hand much more than balancing a little grass which I did not raise. All things considered, that is, considering the importance of a man's soul and of today, notwithstanding the short time occupied by my experiment, nay, partly even because of its transient character, I believe that that was doing better than any farmer in Concord did that year.

The next year I did better still, for I spaded up all the land which I required, about a third of an acre, and I learned from the experience of both years, not being in the least awed by many celebrated works on husbandry, Arthur Young among the rest, that if one would live simply and eat only the crop which he raised, and raise no more than he ate, and not exchange it for an insufficient quantity of more luxurious and expensive things, he would need to cultivate only a few rods of ground, and that it would be cheaper to spade up that than to use oxen to plow it, and to select a fresh spot from time to time than to manure the old, and he could do all his necessary farm work as it were with his left hand at odd hours in the summer; and thus he would not be tied to an ox, or horse, or cow, or pig, as at present. I desire to speak impartially on this point, and as one not interested in the success or failure

of the present economical and social arrangements. I was more independent than any farmer in Concord, for I was not anchored to a house or farm, but could follow the bent of my genius, which is a very crooked one, every moment. Besides being better off than they already, if my house had been burned or my crops had failed, I should have been nearly as well off as before. . . .

By surveying, carpentry, and day-labor of various other kinds in the village in the meanwhile, for I have as many trades as fingers, I had earned \$13.34. The expense of food for eight months, namely, from July 4th to March 1st, the time when these estimates were made, though I lived there more than two years,—not counting potatoes, a little green corn, and some peas, which I had raised, nor considering the value of what was on hand at the last date, was

Rice	\$1 73½	
Molasses	1 73	Cheapest form of the saccharine.
Rye meal	1 04½	
Indian meal	.99½	Cheaper than rye.
Pork	.22	
Flour	.88	Costs more than Indian meal, both money and trouble
Sugar	80	
Lard	65	
Apples	25	
Dried apples	22	
Sweet potatoes	.10	
One pumpkin	.06	
One watermelon	.02	
Salt	.03	

Yes, I did eat \$8 74, all told, but I should not thus unblushingly publish my guilt, if I did not know that most of my readers were equally guilty with myself, and that their deeds would look no better in print. The next year I sometimes caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and once I went so far as to slaughter a woodchuck which ravaged my beanfield,—effect his transmigration, as a Tartar would say,—and devour him, partly for experiment's sake; but though it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, notwithstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the longest use

would not make that a good practice, however it might seem to have your woodchucks ready dressed by the village butcher.

Clothing and some incidental expenses within the same dates, though little can be inferred from this item, amounted to \$8.40½  
Oil and some household utensils 2.00

So that all the pecuniary outgoes, excepting for washing and mending, which for the most part were done out of the house, and their bills have not yet been received,—and these are all and more than all the ways by which money necessarily goes out in this part of the world,—were

House	\$28.12½
Farm, one year	14.72½
Food eight months	8.74
Clothing, etc., eight months	8.40½
Oil, etc., eight months	2.00
In all	\$61.99½

I address myself now to those of my readers who have a living to get. And to meet this I have for farm produce sold

Earned by day-labor	\$23.44
In all	13.34
	\$36.78

which subtracted from the sum of the outgoes leaves a balance of \$25.21½ on the one side,—this being very nearly the means with which I started, and the measure of expenses to be incurred,—and on the other, besides the leisure and independence and health thus secured, a comfortable house for me as long as I choose to occupy it.

These statistics, however accidental and therefore unimportant they may appear, as they have a certain completeness, have a certain value also. Nothing was given me of which I have not rendered some account. It appears from the above estimate, that my food alone cost me in money about twenty-seven cents a week. It was for nearly two years after this, rye and Indian meal, without yeast, potatoes, rice, a very little salt pork, molasses, and salt, and my drink, water. It was fit that I should live on rice, mainly, who loved so well the philosophy of India. To meet the objections of some inveterate cavilers, I may as

well state that if I dined out occasionally, as I always had done, and I trust shall have opportunities to do again, it was frequently to the detriment of my domestic arrangements. But the dining out, being, as I have stated, a constant element, does not in the least affect a comparative statement like this.

I learned from my two years' experience that it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain one's necessary food, even in this latitude; that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals, and yet retain health and strength. I have made a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several accounts, simply off a dish of purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) which I gathered in my cornfield, boiled and salted. I give the Latin on account of the savoriness of the trivial name. And pray what more can a reasonable man desire, in peaceful times, in ordinary noons, than a sufficient number of ears of green sweet-corn boiled, with the addition of salt? Even the little variety that I used was a yielding to the demands of appetite, and not of health. Yet men have come to such a pass that they frequently starve, not for want of necessities, but for want of luxuries; and I know a good woman who thinks that her son lost his life because he took to drinking water only. . .

### *Where I Lived and What I Lived for*

I WAS seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground, but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn hugh up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the

woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, midafternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hilltop near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, unged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tip-toe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a corn in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or

confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose, stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara,<sup>1</sup> when his herds required new and larger pastures

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually 20 had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair,<sup>2</sup> then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted: 30

"There was a shepherd that did live,  
And held his thoughts as high  
As were the mounts whereon his flocks  
Did hourly feed him by."

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may 40 say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshiper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tchong-thang to this effect: "Renew

thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmoical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas<sup>1</sup> say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon,<sup>2</sup> are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic

<sup>1</sup> the Hindu divinity, Krishna    <sup>2</sup> The Pleiades and the Hyades are star groups. Aldebaran is the brightest star in the Hyades. Altair is a star of the first magnitude in the constellation Aquila.

<sup>1</sup> ancient sacred writings of the Hindus    <sup>2</sup> Memnon, son of Aurora and Tythoneus, was king of the Ethiopians. Of a colossal statue near Thebes, Egypt, said to be Memnon's, it was reported that, when the first rays of the morning fell on it, a harplike sound was emitted, supposed to be Memnon's greeting to his mother



and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face? . . .

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear, nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants, though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes,<sup>1</sup> it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a

superfluous and avoidable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one, instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land, and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether they do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad, it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails

<sup>1</sup> According to Homer's *Iliad* (III, 6) the pygmies, a nation of dwarfs, had to fight the cranes that migrated every winter to their country, attacking the cornfields.

are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, 10 and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again. .

### *Solitude*

I FIND it wholesome to be alone the greater 20 part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows 30 The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert. The farmer can work alone in the field or in the woods all day, hoeing or chopping, and not feel lonesome, because he is employed, but when he comes home at night he cannot sit down in a room alone, at the mercy of his thoughts, but must be where he can "see the folks," and recreate, and as he thinks remunerate himself 40 for his day's solitude, and hence he wonders how the student can sit alone in the house all night and most of the day without ennui and "the blues", but he does not realize that the student, though in the house, is still at work in his field, and chopping in his woods, as the farmer in his, and in turn seeks the same recreation and society that the latter does, though it may be a more condensed form of it.

Society is commonly too cheap. We meet 50 at very short intervals, not having had time

to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a day, and give each other a new taste of that musty old cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules called etiquette and politeness to make this frequent meeting tolerable, and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post-office, and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night, we live thick and are in each other's way, and stumble over one another, and I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for all important and heart communications. Consider the girls in a factory,—never alone, hardly in their dreams. It would be better if there were but one inhabitant to a square mile, as where I live. The value of a man is not in his skin, that we should touch him .

I have a great deal of company in my house, especially in the morning, when nobody calls. Let me suggest a few comparisons, that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more lonely than the loon in the pond that laughs so loud, or than Walden Pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray? And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters. The sun is alone, except in thick weather, when there sometimes appear to be two, but one is a mock sun. God is alone—but the devil, he is far from being alone; he sees a great deal of company, he is legion. I am no more lonely than a single mullein or dandelion in a pasture, or a bean leaf, or sorrel, or a horse-fly, or a humble-bee. I am no more lonely than the Mill Brook, or a weathercock, or the north star, or an April shower, or a January thaw, or the first spider in a new house.

### *The Ponds*

SOMETIMES, having had a surfeit of human society and gossip, and worn out all my village friends, I rambled still farther westward than I habitually dwell, into yet more unfrequented parts of the town, "to fresh woods and pastures new," or, while the sun was setting, made my supper of huckleberries and blueberries on Fair Haven Hill,

and laid up a store for several days. The fruits do not yield their true flavor to the purchaser of them, nor to him who raises them for the market. There is but one way to obtain it, yet few take that way. If you would know the flavor of huckleberries, ask the cow-boy or the partridge. It is a vulgar error to suppose that you have tasted huckleberries who never plucked them. A huckleberry never reaches Boston, they have not been known there since they grew on her three hills. The ambrosial and essential part of the fruit is lost with the bloom which is rubbed off in the market cart, and they become mere provender. As long as Eternal Justice reigns, not one innocent huckleberry can be transported thither from the country's hills.

Occasionally, after my hoeing was done for the day, I joined some impatient companion who had been fishing on the pond since morning, as silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf, and, after practising various kinds of philosophy, had concluded commonly, by the time I arrived, that he belonged to the ancient sect of Cœnobites.<sup>1</sup> There was one older man, an excellent fisher and skilled in all kinds of woodcraft, who was pleased to look upon my house as a building erected for the convenience of fishermen, and I was equally pleased when he sat in my doorway to arrange his lines. Once in a while we sat together on the pond, he at one end of the boat, and I at the other, but not many words passed between us, for he had grown deaf in his later years, but he occasionally hummed a psalm, which harmonized well enough with my philosophy. Our intercourse was thus altogether one of unbroken harmony, far more pleasing to remember than if it had been carried on by speech. When, as was commonly the case, I had none to commune with, I used to raise the echoes by striking with a paddle on the side of my boat, filling the surrounding woods with circling and dilating sound, stirring them up as the keeper of a menagerie his wild beasts, until I elicited a growl from every wooded vale and hillside.

<sup>1</sup> monks who are members of a religious community as distinguished from those who lead solitary lives

In warm evenings I frequently sat in the boat playing the flute, and saw the perch, which I seemed to have charmed, hovering around me, and the moon travelling over the ribbed bottom, which was strewn with the wrecks of the forest. Formerly I had come to this pond adventurously, from time to time, in dark summer nights, with a companion, and making a fire close to the water's edge, which we thought attracted the fishes, we caught pouts with a bunch of worms strung on a thread, and when we had done, far in the night, threw the burning brands high into the air like skyrockets, which, coming down into the pond, were quenched with a loud hissing, and we were suddenly groping in total darkness. Through this, whistling a tune, we took our way to the haunts of men again. But now I had made my home by the shore.

Sometimes, after staying in a village parlor till the family had all retired, I have returned to the woods, and, partly with a view to the next day's dinner, spent the hours of midnight fishing from a boat by moonlight, serenaded by owls and foxes, and hearing, from time to time, the creaking note of some unknown bird close at hand. These experiences were very memorable and valuable to me—anchored in forty feet of water, and twenty or thirty rods from the shore, surrounded sometimes by thousands of small perch and shiners, dumpling the surface with their tails in the moonlight, and communicating by a long flaxen line with mysterious nocturnal fishes which had their dwelling forty feet below, or sometimes dragging sixty feet of line about the pond as I drifted in the gentle night breeze, now and then feeling a slight vibration along it, indicative of some life prowling about its extremity, of dull uncertain blundering purpose there, and slow to make up its mind. At length you slowly raise, pulling hand over hand, some horned pout squeaking and squirming to the upper air. It was very queer, especially in dark nights, when your thoughts had wandered to vast and cosmogonical themes in other spheres, to feel this faint jerk, which came to interrupt your dreams and link you to Nature again. It seemed as if I might next

cast my line upward into the air, as well as downward into this element which was scarcely more dense. Thus I caught two fishes as it were with one hook.

The scenery of Walden is on a humble scale, and, though very beautiful, does not approach to grandeur, nor can it much concern one who has not long frequented it or lived by its shore, yet this pond is so remarkable for its depth and purity as to merit a particular description. It is a clear and deep green well, half a mile long and a mile and three quarters in circumference, and contains about sixty-one and a half acres, a perennial spring in the midst of pine and oak woods, without any visible inlet or outlet except by the clouds and evaporation. The surrounding hills rise abruptly from the water to the height of forty to eighty feet, though on the southeast and east they attain to about one hundred and one hundred and fifty feet respectively, within a quarter and a third of a mile. They are exclusively woodland. All our Concord waters have two colors at least, one when viewed at a distance, and another, more proper, close at hand. The first depends more on the light, and follows the sky. In clear weather, in summer, they appear blue at a little distance, especially if agitated, and at a great distance all appear alike. In stormy weather they are sometimes of a dark slate color. The sea, however, is said to be blue one day and green another without any perceptible change in the atmosphere. I have seen our river, when, the landscape being covered with snow, both water and ice were almost as green as grass. Some consider blue "to be the color of pure water, whether liquid or solid." But, looking directly down into our waters from a boat, they are seen to be of very different colors. Walden is blue at one time and green at another, even from the same point of view. Lying between the earth and the heavens, it partakes of the color of both. Viewed from a hilltop it reflects the color of the sky, but near at hand it is of a yellowish tint next the shore where you can see the sand, then a light green, which gradually deepens to a uniform dark green in the body of the pond. In some lights, viewed

even from a hilltop, it is of a vivid green next the shore. Some have referred this to the reflection of the verdure; but it is equally green there against the railroad sand-bank, and in the spring, before the leaves are expanded, and it may be simply the result of the prevailing blue mixed with the yellow of the sand. Such is the color of its iris. This is that portion, also, where in the spring, the ice being warmed by the heat of the sun reflected from the bottom, and also transmitted through the earth, melts first and forms a narrow canal about the still frozen middle. Like the rest of our waters, when much agitated, in clear weather, so that the surface of the waves may reflect the sky at the right angle, or because there is more light mixed with it, it appears at a little distance of a darker blue than the sky itself, and at such a time, being on its surface, and looking with divided vision, so as to see the reflection, I have discerned a matchless and indescribable light blue, such as watered or changeable silks and sword blades suggest, more cerulean than the sky itself, alternating with the original dark green on the opposite sides of the waves, which last appeared but muddy in comparison. It is a vitreous greenish blue, as I remember it, like those patches of the winter sky seen through cloud vistas in the west before sundown. Yet a single glass of its water held up to the light is as colorless as an equal quantity of air. It is well known that a large plate of glass will have a green tint, owing, as the makers say, to its "body," but a small piece of the same will be colorless. How large a body of Walden water would be required to reflect a green tint I have never proved. The water of our river is black or a very dark brown to one looking directly down on it, and, like that of most ponds, imparts to the body of one bathing in it a yellowish tinge, but this water is of such crystalline purity that the body of the bather appears of an alabaster whiteness, still more unnatural, which, as the limbs are magnified and distorted withal, produces a monstrous effect, making fit studies for a Michael Angelo.

The water is so transparent that the bottom can easily be discerned at the depth of twenty-five or thirty feet. Paddling over it, you may

see many feet beneath the surface the schools of perch and shiners, perhaps only an inch long, yet the former easily distinguished by their transverse bars, and you think that they must be ascetic fish that find a subsistence there. Once, in the winter, many years ago, when I had been cutting holes through the ice in order to catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I tossed my axe back on to the ice, but, as if some evil genius had directed it, it slid 10 four or five rods directly into one of the holes, where the water was twenty-five feet deep. Out of curiosity, I lay down on the ice and looked through the hole, until I saw the axe a little on one side, standing on its head, with its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with the pulse of the pond, and there it might have stood erect and swaying till in the course of time the handle rotted off, if I had not disturbed it. Making another hole directly over it with an ice chisel which I had, and cutting down the longest birch which I could find in the neighborhood with my knife, I made a slip noose, which I attached to its end, and, letting it down carefully, passed it over the knob of the handle, and drew it by a line along the birch, and so pulled the axe out again.

The shore is composed of a belt of smooth rounded white stones like paving stones, excepting one or two short sand beaches, and is so steep that in many places a single leap will carry you into the water over your head, and were it not for its remarkable transparency, that would be the last to be seen of its bottom till it rose on the opposite side. Some think it is bottomless. It is nowhere muddy, and a casual observer would say that there were no weeds at all in it, and of noticeable plants, except in the little meadows recently overflowed, which do not properly 40 belong to it, a closer scrutiny does not detect a flag nor a bulrush, nor even a lily, yellow or white, but only a few small heart-leaves and potamogetons,<sup>1</sup> and perhaps a water-target or two, all which however a bather might not perceive, and these plants are clean and bright like the element they grow in. The stones extend a rod or two into the water, and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the deepest

parts, where there is usually a little sediment, probably from the decay of the leaves which have been wafted on to it so many successive falls; and a bright green weed is brought up on anchors even in midwinter.

We have one other pond just like this—White Pond in Nine Acre Corner, about two and a half miles westerly; but, though I am acquainted with most of the ponds within a dozen miles of this centre, I do not know a third of this pure and well-like character. Successive nations perchance have drank at, admired, and fathomed it, and passed away, and still its water is green and pellucid as ever. Not an intermitting spring! Perhaps on that spring morning when Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden, Walden Pond was already in existence, and even then breaking up in a gentle spring rain accompanied with mist and a southerly wind, and covered with myriads of ducks and geese, which had not heard of the fall, when still such pure lakes sufficed them. Even then it had commenced to rise and fall, and had clarified its waters and colored them of the hue they now wear, and obtained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden Pond in the world and distiller of celestial dews. Who knows in how many unremembered nations' 30 literatures this has been the Castalian Fountain? or what nymphs presided over it in the Golden Age? It is a gem of the first water which Concord wears in her coronet.

Yet perchance the first who came to this well have left some trace of their footsteps. I have been surprised to detect encircling the pond, even where a thick wood has just been cut down on the shore, a narrow shelf-like path in the steep hillside, alternately rising and falling, approaching and receding from the water's edge, as old probably as the race of man here, worn by the feet of aboriginal hunters, and still from time to time unwittingly trodden by the present occupants of the land. This is particularly distinct to one standing on the middle of the pond in winter, just after a light snow has fallen, appearing as a clear undulating white line, unobscured by weeds and twigs, and very obvious a quarter of a mile off in many places where in summer it is hardly distinguishable close at

<sup>1</sup> pondweeds, found in still waters of the temperate zones

hand. The snow reprints it, as it were, in clear white type alto-relievo.<sup>1</sup> The ornamented grounds of villas which will one day be built here may still preserve some trace of this.

The pond rises and falls, but whether regularly or not, and within what period, nobody knows, though, as usual, many pretend to know. It is commonly higher in the winter and lower in the summer, though not corresponding to the general wet and dryness I can remember when it was a foot or two lower, and also when it was at least five feet higher, than when I lived by it. There is a narrow sand-bar running into it, with very deep water on one side, on which I helped boil a kettle of chowder, some six rods from the main shore, about the year 1824, which it has not been possible to do for twenty-five years, and on the other hand, my friends used to listen with incredulity when I told them, that a few years later I was accustomed to fish from a boat in a secluded cove in the woods, fifteen rods from the only shore they knew, which place was long since converted into a meadow. But the pond has risen steadily for two years, and now, in the summer of '52, is just five feet higher than when I lived there, or as high as it was thirty years ago, and fishing goes on again in the meadow. This makes a difference of level, at the outside, of six or seven feet, and yet the water shed by the surrounding hills is insignificant in amount, and this overflow must be referred to causes which affect the deep springs. This same summer the pond has begun to fall again. It is remarkable that this fluctuation, whether periodical or not, appears thus to require many years for its accomplishment. I have observed one rise and a part of two falls, and I expect that a dozen or fifteen years hence the water will again be as low as I have ever known it. Flint's Pond, a mile eastward, allowing for the disturbance occasioned by its inlets and outlets, and the smaller intermediate ponds also, sympathize with Walden, and recently attained their greatest height at the same time with the latter. The same is true, as far as my observation goes, of White Pond.

<sup>1</sup> A term used in sculpture, meaning that a figure stands out in "high relief," i.e., projects prominently from a background.

Thus rise and fall of Walden at long intervals serves this use at least; the water standing at this great height for a year or more, though it makes it difficult to walk round it, kills the shrubs and trees which have sprung up about its edge since the last rise—pitch-pines, birches, alders, aspens, and others—and, falling again, leaves an unobstructed shore, for, unlike many ponds and all waters which are subject to a daily tide, its shore is cleanest when the water is lowest. On the side of the pond next my house a row of pitch-pines fifteen feet high has been killed and tipped over as if by a lever, and thus a stop put to their encroachments, and their size indicates how many years have elapsed since the last rise to this height. By this fluctuation the pond asserts its title to a shore, and thus the shore is *shorn*, and the trees cannot hold it by right of possession. These are the lips of the lake, on which no beard grows. It licks its chaps from time to time. When the water is at its height, the alders, willows, and maples send forth a mass of fibrous red roots several feet long from all sides of their stems in the water, and to the height of three or four feet from the ground, in the effort to maintain themselves, and I have known the high blueberry bushes about the shore, which commonly produce no fruit, bear an abundant crop under these circumstances.

Some have been puzzled to tell how the shore became so regularly paved. My townsmen have all heard the tradition—the oldest people tell me that they heard it in their youth—that anciently the Indians were holding a pow-wow upon a hill there, which rose as high into the heavens as the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they used much profanity, as the story goes, though this vice is one of which the Indians were never guilty, and while they were thus engaged the hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her the pond was named. It has been conjectured that when the hill shook, these stones rolled down its side and became the present shore. It is very certain, at any rate, that once there was no pond here, and now there is one, and this Indian fable does not in any respect

conflict with the account of that ancient settler whom I have mentioned, who remembers so well when he first came here with his divining rod, saw a thin vapor rising from the sward, and the hazel pointed steadily downward, and he concluded to dig a well here. As for the stones, many still think that they are hardly to be accounted for by the action of the waves on these hills, but I observe that the surrounding hills are remarkably full of the same kind of stones, so that they have been obliged to pile them up in walls on both sides of the railroad cut nearest the pond, and, moreover, there are most stones where the shore is most abrupt, so that, unfortunately, it is no longer a mystery to me. I detect the paver. If the name was not derived from that of some English locality—Saffron Walden, for instance—one might suppose that it was called, originally, *Walled-in Pond*

The pond was my well ready dug. For four months in the year its water is as cold as it is pure at all times, and I think that it is then as good as any, if not the best, in the town. In the winter, all water which is exposed to the air is colder than springs and wells which are protected from it. The temperature of the pond water which had stood in the room where I sat from five o'clock in the afternoon till noon the next day, the 6th of March, 1846, the thermometer having been up to 65° or 70° some of the time, owing partly to the sun on the roof, was 42°, or one degree colder than the water of one of the coldest wells in the village just drawn. The temperature of the Boiling Spring the same day was 45°, or the warmest of any water tried, though it is the coldest that I know of in summer, when, beside, shallow and stagnant surface water is not mingled with it. Moreover, in summer, Walden never becomes so warm as most water which is exposed to the sun, on account of its depth. In the warmest weather I usually placed a pailful in my cellar, where it became cool in the night, and remained so during the day; though I also resorted to a spring in the neighborhood. It was as good when a week old as the day it was dipped, and had no taste of the pump. Whoever camps for a week in summer by the shore of a pond,

needs only bury a pail of water a few feet deep in the shade of his camp to be independent of the luxury of ice.

There have been caught in Walden pickerel, one weighing seven pounds, to say nothing of another which carried off a reel with great velocity, which the fisherman safely set down at eight pounds because he did not see him, perch and pouts, some of each weighing over two pounds, shiners, chivins or roach (*Leuciscus pulchellus*), a very few breams, and a couple of eels, one weighing four pounds—I am thus particular because the weight of a fish is commonly its only title to fame, and these are the only eels I have heard of here,—also, I have a faint recollection of a little fish some five inches long, with silvery sides and a greenish back, somewhat dace-like in its character, which I mention here chiefly to link my facts to fable. Nevertheless, this pond is not very fertile in fish. Its pickerel, though not abundant, are its chief boast. I have seen at one time lying on the ice pickerel of at least three different kinds, a long and shallow one, steel-colored, most like those caught in the river, a bright golden kind, with greenish reflections and remarkably deep, which is the most common here, and another, golden-colored, and shaped like the last, but peppered on the sides with small dark brown or black spots, intermixed with a few faint blood-red ones, very much like a trout. The specific name *reticulatus* would not apply to this; it should be *guttatus* rather. These are all very firm fish, and weigh more than their size promises. The shiners, pouts, and perch also, and indeed all the fishes which inhabit this pond, are much cleaner, handsomer, and firmer fleshed than those in the river and most other ponds, as the water is purer, and they can easily be distinguished from them. Probably many ichthyologists would make new varieties of some of them. There are also a clean race of frogs and tortoises, and a few mussels in it, muskrats and minks leave their traces about it, and occasionally a travelling mud-turtle visits it. Sometimes, when I pushed off my boat in the morning, I disturbed a great mud-turtle which had secreted himself under the boat in the night. Ducks and geese frequent it in the spring and fall, the

white-bellied swallows (*Hirundo bicolor*) skim over it, and the peewees (*Totanus macularius*) "teter" along its stony shores all summer I have sometimes disturbed a fish-hawk sitting on a white-pine over the water; but I doubt if it is ever profaned by the wing of a gull, like Fair Haven. At most, it tolerates one annual loon. These are all the animals of consequence which frequent it now.

You may see from a boat, in calm weather, near the sandy eastern shore, where the water is eight or ten feet deep, and also in some other parts of the pond, some circular heaps half a dozen feet in diameter by a foot in height, consisting of small stones less than a hen's egg in size, where all around is bare sand. At first you wonder if the Indians could have formed them on the ice for any purpose, and so, when the ice melted, they sank to the bottom, but they are too regular and some of them plainly too fresh for that. They are similar to those found in rivers, but as there are no suckers nor lampreys here, I know not by what fish they could be made. Perhaps they are the nests of the chivin. These lend a pleasing mystery to the bottom.

The shore is irregular enough not to be monotonous. I have in my mind's eye the western indented with deep bays, the bolder northern, and the beautifully scalloped southern shore, where successive capes overlap each other and suggest unexplored coves between. The forest has never so good a setting, nor is so distinctly beautiful, as when seen from the middle of a small lake amid hills which rise from the water's edge, for the water in which it is reflected not only makes the best foreground in such a case, but, with its winding shore, the most natural and agreeable boundary to it. There is no rawness nor imperfection in its edge there, as where the axe has cleared a part, or a cultivated field abuts on it. The trees have ample room to expand on the water side, and each sends forth its most vigorous branch in that direction. There Nature has woven a natural selva, and the eye rises by just gradations from the low shrubs of the shore to the highest trees. There are few traces of man's hand to be seen. The water laves the shore as it did a thousand years ago.

A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature. The fluvial trees next the shore are the slender eyelashes which fringe it, and the wooded hills and cliffs around are its overhanging brows.

Standing on the smooth sandy beach at the east end of the pond, in a calm September afternoon, when a slight haze makes the opposite shore-line indistinct, I have seen whence came the expression, "the glassy surface of a lake." When you invert your head, it looks like a thread of finest gossamer stretched across the valley, and gleaming against the distant pine woods, separating one stratum of the atmosphere from another. You would think that you could walk dry under it to the opposite hills, and that the swallows which skim over might perch on it. Indeed, they sometimes dive below the line, as it were by mistake, and are undeceived. As you look over the pond westward you are obliged to employ both your hands to defend your eyes against the reflected as well as the true sun, for they are equally bright, and if, between the two, you survey its surface critically, it is literally as smooth as glass, except where the skater insects, at equal intervals scattered over its whole extent, by their motions in the sun produce the finest imaginable sparkle on it, or, perchance, a duck plumes itself, or, as I have said, a swallow skims so low as to touch it. It may be that in the distance a fish describes an arc of three or four feet in the air, and there is one bright flash where it emerges, and another where it strikes the water, sometimes the whole silvery arc is revealed, or here and there, perhaps, is a thistledown floating on its surface, which the fishes dart at and so dimple it again. It is like molten glass cooled but not congealed, and the few motes in it are pure and beautiful, like the imperfections in glass. You may often detect a yet smoother and darker water, separated from the rest as if by an invisible cobweb, boom of the water nymphs, resting on it. From a hilltop you can see a fish leap in almost any part, for not a pickerel or shiner picks an insect from this smooth surface but it manifestly disturbs the equilibrium of the



whole lake. It is wonderful with what elaborateness this simple fact is advertised—thus piscine murder will out—and from my distant perch I distinguish the circling undulations when they are half a dozen rods in diameter. You can even detect a water-bug (*Gyrinus*) ceaselessly progressing over the smooth surface a quarter of a mile off; for they furrow the water slightly, making a conspicuous ripple bounded by two diverging lines, but the skaters glide over it without rippling it perceptibly. When the surface is considerably agitated there are no skaters nor water-bugs on it, but apparently, in calm days, they leave their havens and adventurously glide forth from the shore by short impulses till they completely cover it. It is a soothing employment, on one of those fine days in the fall, when all the warmth of the sun is fully appreciated, to sit on a stump on such a height as this, overlooking the pond, and study the dimpling circles which are incessantly inscribed on its otherwise invisible surface amid the reflected skies and trees. Over this great expanse there is no disturbance but it is thus at once gently smoothed away and assuaged, as, when a vase of water is jarred, the trembling circles seek the shore, and all is smooth again. Not a fish can leap or an insect fall on the pond but it is thus reported in circling dimples, in lines of beauty, as it were the constant welling up of its fountain, the gentle pulsing of its life, the heaving of its breast. The thrills of joy and thrills of pain are undistinguishable. How peaceful the phenomena of the lake! Again the works of man shine as in the spring, ay, every leaf and twig and stone and cobweb sparkles now at midafternoon as when covered with dew in a spring morning. Every motion of an oar or an insect produces a flash of light, and if an oar falls, how sweet the echo!

In such a day, in September or October, Walden is a perfect forest mirror, set round with stones as precious to my eye as if fewer or rarer. Nothing so fair, so pure, and at the same time so large, as a lake, perchance, lies on the surface of the earth. Sky water. It needs no fence. Nations come and go without defiling it. It is a mirror which no

stone can crack, whose quicksilver will never wear off, whose gilding Nature continually repairs, no storms, no dust, can dim its surface ever fresh;—a mirror in which all impurity presented to it sinks, swept and dusted by the sun's hazy brush—thus the light dust-cloth—which retains no breath that is breathed on it, but sends its own to float as clouds high above its surface, and be reflected in its bosom still.

A field of water betrays the spirit that is in the air. It is continually receiving new life and motion from above. It is intermediate in its nature between land and sky. On land only the grass and trees wave, but the water itself is rippled by the wind. I see where the breeze dashes across it by the streaks or flakes of light. It is remarkable that we can look down on its surface. We shall, perhaps, look down thus on the surface of air at length, and mark where a still subtler spirit sweeps over it.

The skaters and water-bugs finally disappear in the latter part of October, when the severe frosts have come, and then and in November, usually, in a calm day, there is absolutely nothing to ripple the surface. One November afternoon, in the calm at the end of a rain storm of several days' duration, when the sky was still completely overcast and the air was full of mist, I observed that the pond was remarkably smooth, so that it was difficult to distinguish its surface, though it no longer reflected the bright tints of October, but the somber November colors of the surrounding hills. Though I passed over it as gently as possible, the slight undulations produced by my boat extended almost as far as I could see, and gave a ribbed appearance to the reflections. But, as I was looking over the surface, I saw here and there at a distance a faint glimmer, as if some skater insects which had escaped the frosts might be collected there, or, perchance, the surface, being so smooth, betrayed where a spring welled up from the bottom. Paddling gently to one of these places, I was surprised to find myself surrounded by myriads of small perch, about five inches long, of a rich bronze color in the green water, sporting there and constantly rising to the surface and dimpling it,

sometimes leaving bubbles on it. In such transparent and seemingly bottomless water, reflecting the clouds, I seemed to be floating through the air as in a balloon, and their swimming impressed me as a kind of flight or hovering, as if they were a compact flock of birds passing just beneath my level on the right or left, their fins, like sails, set all around them. There were many such schools in the pond, apparently improving the short season before winter would draw an icy shutter over their broad skylight, sometimes giving to the surface an appearance as if a slight breeze struck it, or a few raindrops fell there. When I approached carelessly and alarmed them, they made a sudden splash and rippling with their tails, as if one had struck the water with a brushy bough, and instantly took refuge in the depths. At length the wind rose, the mist increased, and the waves began to run, and the perch leaped much higher than before, half out of water, a hundred black points, three inches long, at once above the surface. Even as late as the 5th of December, one year, I saw some dimples on the surface, and thinking it was going to rain hard immediately, the air being full of mist, I made haste to take my place at the oars and row homeward; already the rain seemed rapidly increasing, though I felt none on my cheek, and I anticipated a thorough soaking. But suddenly the dimples ceased, for they were produced by the perch, which the noise of my oars had scared into the depths, and I saw their schools dimly disappearing, so I spent a dry afternoon after all.

An old man who used to frequent this pond nearly sixty years ago, when it was dark with surrounding forests, tells me that in those days he sometimes saw it all alive with ducks and other waterfowl, and that there were many eagles about it. He came here a-fishing, and used an old log canoe which he found on the shore. It was made of two white-pine logs dug out and pinned together, and was cut off square at the ends. It was very clumsy, but lasted a great many years before it became water-logged and perhaps sank to the bottom. He did not know whose it was; it belonged to the pond. He used to make a cable for his anchor of strips

of hickory bark tied together. An old man, a potter, who lived by the pond before the Revolution, told him once that there was an iron chest at the bottom, and that he had seen it. Sometimes it would come floating up to the shore; but when you went toward it, it would go back into deep water and disappear. I was pleased to hear of the old log canoe, which took the place of an Indian one of the same material but more graceful construction, which perchance had first been a tree on the bank, and then, as it were, fell into the water, to float there for a generation, the most proper vessel for the lake. I remember that when I first looked into these depths there were many large trunks to be seen indistinctly lying on the bottom, which had either been blown over formerly, or left on the ice at the last cutting, when wood was cheaper, but now they have mostly disappeared.

When I first paddled a boat on Walden, it was completely surrounded by thick and lofty pine and oak woods, and in some of its coves grape vines had run over the trees next the water and formed bowers under which a boat could pass. The hills which form its shores are so steep, and the woods on them were then so high, that, as you looked down from the west end, it had the appearance of an amphitheater for some kind of sylvan spectacle. I have spent many an hour, when I was younger, floating over its surface as the zephyr willed, having paddled my boat to the middle, and lying on my back across the seats, in a summer forenoon, dreaming awake, until I was aroused by the boat touching the sand, and I arose to see what shore my fates had impelled me to—days when idleness was the most attractive and productive industry. Many a forenoon have I stolen away, preferring to spend thus the most valued part of the day, for I was rich, if not in money, in sunny hours and summer days, and spent them lavishly; nor do I regret that I did not waste more of them in the workshop or the teacher's desk. But since I left those shores the wood choppers have still further laid them waste, and now for many a year there will be no more rambling through the aisles of the wood, with occasional vistas through which you see the water. My

Muse may be excused if she is silent henceforth. How can you expect the birds to sing when their groves are cut down?

Now the trunks of trees on the bottom, and the old log canoe, and the dark surrounding woods, are gone, and the villagers, who scarcely know where it lies, instead of going to the pond to bathe or drink, are thinking to bring its water, which should be as sacred as the Ganges at least, to the village in a pipe, to wash their dishes with!—to earn their Walden by the turning of a cock or drawing of a plug! That devilish Iron Horse, whose ear-rending neigh is heard throughout the town, has muddied the Boiling Spring with his foot, and he it is that has browsed off all the woods on Walden shore; that Trojan horse, with a thousand men in his belly, introduced by mercenary Greeks! Where is the country's champion, the Moore of Moore Hall, to meet him at the Deep Cut and thrust an avenging lance between the ribs of the bloated pest?

Nevertheless, of all the characters I have known, perhaps Walden wears best, and best preserves its purity. Many men have been likened to it, but few deserve that honor. Though the wood choppers have laid bare first this shore and then that, and the Irish have built their sties by it, and the railroad has infringed on its border, and the ice-men have skimmed it once, it is itself unchanged, the same water which my youthful eyes fell on; all the change is in me. It has not acquired one permanent wrinkle after all its ripples. It is perennially young, and I may stand and see a swallow dip apparently to pick an insect from its surface as of yore. It struck me again tonight, as if I had not seen it almost daily for more than twenty years—Why, here is Walden, the same woodland lake that I discovered so many years ago, where a forest was cut down last winter another is springing up by its shore as lustily as ever, the same thought is welling up to its surface that was then; it is the same liquid joy and happiness to itself and its Maker, ay, and it *may* be to me. It is the work of a brave man surely, in whom there was no guile! He rounded this water with his hand, deepened and clarified it in his thought, and in his will bequeathed it to Concord. I see by its face that it is visited

by the same reflection; and I can almost say, Walden, is it you?

It is no dream of mine,  
To ornament a line;  
I cannot come nearer to God and Heaven  
Than I live to Walden even  
I am its stony shore,  
And the breeze that passes o'er;  
In the hollow of my hand  
Are its water and its sand,  
And its deepest resort  
Lies high in my thought.

The cars never pause to look at it; yet I fancy that the engineers and firemen and brakemen, and those passengers who have a season ticket and see it often, are better men for the sight. The engineer does not forget at night, or his nature does not, that he has beheld this vision of serenity and purity once at least during the day. Though seen but once, it helps to wash out State Street and the engine's soot. One proposes that it be called "God's Drop."

I have said that Walden has no visible inlet nor outlet, but it is on the one hand distantly and indirectly related to Flint's Pond, which is more elevated, by a chain of small ponds coming from that quarter, and on the other directly and manifestly to Concord River, which is lower, by a similar chain of ponds through which in some other geological period it may have flowed, and by a little digging, which God forbid, it can be made to flow thither again. If by living thus reserved and austere, like a hermit in the woods, so long, it has acquired such wonderful purity, who would not regret that the comparatively impure waters of Flint's Pond should be mingled with it, or itself should ever go to waste its sweetness in the ocean wave?

Flint's, or Sandy Pond, in Lincoln, our greatest lake and inland sea, lies about a mile east of Walden. It is much larger, being said to contain one hundred and ninety-seven acres, and is more fertile in fish, but it is comparatively shallow, and not remarkably pure. A walk through the woods thither was often my recreation. It was worth the while, if only to feel the wind blow on your cheek freely,

and see the waves run, and remember the life of mariners. I went a-chestnutting there in the fall, on windy days, when the nuts were dropping into the water and were washed to my feet; and one day, as I crept along its sedgy shore, the fresh spray blowing in my face, I came upon the mouldering wreck of a boat, the sides gone, and hardly more than the impression of its flat bottom left amid the rushes, yet its model was sharply defined, as if it were a large decayed pad, with its veins 10 It was as impressive a wreck as one could imagine on the sea-shore, and had as good a moral. It is by this time mere vegetable mould and undistinguishable pond shore, through which rushes and flags have pushed up. I used to admire the ripple marks on the sandy bottom, at the north end of this pond, made firm and hard to the feet of the wader by the pressure of the water, and the rushes which 20 grew in Indian file, in waving lines, corresponding to these marks, rank behind rank, as if the waves had planted them. There also I have found, in considerable quantities, curious balls, composed apparently of fine grass or roots, of pipewort perhaps, from half an inch to four inches in diameter, and perfectly spherical. These wash back and forth in shallow water on a sandy bottom, and are sometimes cast on the shore. They are either 30 solid grass or have a little sand in the middle. At first you would say that they were formed by the action of the waves, like a pebble, yet the smallest are made of equally coarse materials, half an inch long, and they are produced only at one season of the year. Moreover, the waves, I suspect, do not so much construct as wear down a material which has already acquired consistency. They preserve their form when dry for an indefinite period. 40

*Flint's Pond!* Such is the poverty of our nomenclature. What right had the unclean and stupid farmer, whose farm abutted on this sky water, whose shores he has ruthlessly laid bare, to give his name to it? Some skunk-flint, who loved better the reflecting surface of a dollar, or a bright cent, in which he could see his own brazen face, who regarded even the wild ducks which settled in it as trespassers; his fingers grown into crooked and 50 horny talons from the long habit of grasping

harpy-like;—so it is not named for me. I go not there to see him nor to hear of him; who never saw it, who never bathed in it, who never loved it, who never protected it, who never spoke a good word for it, nor thanked God that He had made it. Rather let it be named from the fishes that swim in it, the wild fowl or quadrupeds which frequent it, the wild flowers which grow by its shores, or some wild man or child the thread of whose history is interwoven with its own, not from him who could show no title to it but the deed which a like-minded neighbor or legislature gave him—him who thought only of its money value, whose presence perchance cursed all the shore; who exhausted the land around it, and would fain have exhausted the waters within it, who regretted only that it was not English hay or cranberry meadow—there was nothing to redeem it, forsooth, in his eyes—and would have drained and sold it for the mud at its bottom. It did not turn his mill, and it was no *privilege* to him to behold it. I respect not his labors, his farm where everything has its price, who would carry the landscape, who would carry his God, to market, if he could get anything for him, who goes to market for his god as it is, on whose farm nothing grows free, whose fields bear no crops, whose meadows no flowers, whose trees no fruits, but dollars, who loves not the beauty of his fruits, whose fruits are not ripe for him till they are turned to dollars. Give me the poverty that enjoys true wealth. Farmers are respectable and interesting to me in proportion as they are poor—poor farmers. A model farm! where the house stands like a fungus in a muck-heap, chambers for men, horses, oxen, and swine, cleansed and uncleansed, all contiguous to one another! Stocked with men! A great grease-spot, redolent of manures and buttermilk! Under a high state of cultivation, being manured with the hearts and brains of men! As if you were to raise your potatoes in the churchyard! Such is a model farm.

No, no; if the fairest features of the landscape are to be named after men, let them be the noblest and worthiest men alone. Let our lakes receive as true names at least as the Icarian Sea, where "still the shore" a "brave attempt resounds."

Goose Pond, of small extent, is on my way to Flint's; Fair Haven, an expansion of Concord River, said to contain some seventy acres, is a mile southwest; and White Pond, of about forty acres, is a mile and a half beyond Fair Haven. This is my lake country. These, with Concord River, are my water privileges, and night and day, year in year out, they grind such grist as I carry to them.

Since the woodcutters, and the railroad, and I myself have profaned Walden, perhaps the most attractive, if not the most beautiful, of all our lakes, the gem of the woods, is White Pond,—a poor name from its commonness, whether derived from the remarkable purity of its waters or the color of its sands. In these as in other respects, however, it is a lesser twin of Walden. They are so much alike that you would say they must be connected under ground. It has the same stony shore, and its waters are of the same hue. As at Walden, in sultry dog-day weather, looking down through the woods on some of its bays which are not so deep but that the reflection from the bottom tinges them, its waters are of a misty bluish-green or glaucous color. Many years since I used to go there to collect the sand by cartloads, to make sandpaper with, and I have continued to visit it ever since. One who frequents it purposes to call it Virid Lake. Perhaps it might be called Yellow Pine Lake, from the following circumstance. About fifteen years ago you could see the top of a pitch-pine, of the kind called yellow pine hereabouts, though it is not a distinct species, projecting above the surface in deep water, many rods from the shore. It was even supposed by some that the pond had sunk, and this was one of the primitive forest that formerly stood there. I find that even so long ago as 1792, in a *Topographical Description of the Town of Concord*, by one of its citizens, in the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the author, after speaking of Walden and White Ponds, adds "In the middle of the latter may be seen, when the water is very low, a tree which appears as if it grew in the place where it now stands, although the roots are fifty feet below the surface of the water, the top of this tree is broken off, and at that place measures fourteen

inches in diameter." In the spring of '49 I talked with a man who lived nearest the pond in Sudbury, who told me that it was he who got out this tree ten or fifteen years before. As near as he could remember, it stood twelve or fifteen rods from the shore, where the water was thirty or forty feet deep. It was in the winter, and he had been getting out ice in the forenoon, and had resolved that in the afternoon, with the aid of his neighbors, he would take out the old yellow pine. He sawed a channel in the ice toward the shore, and hauled it over and along and out on to the ice with oxen, but, before he had gone far in his work, he was surprised to find that it was wrong end upward, with the stumps of the branches pointing down, and the small end firmly fastened in the sandy bottom. It was about a foot in diameter at the big end, and he had expected to get a good saw-log, but it was so rotten as to be fit only for fuel, if for that. He had some of it in his shed then. There were marks of an axe and of woodpeckers on the butt. He thought that it might have been a dead tree on the shore, but was finally blown over into the pond, and after the top had become water-logged, while the butt-end was still dry and light, had drifted out and sunk wrong end up. His father, eighty years old, could not remember when it was not there. Several pretty large logs may still be seen lying on the bottom, where, owing to the undulation of the surface, they look like huge water snakes in motion.

This pond has rarely been profaned by a boat, for there is little in it to tempt a fisherman. Instead of the white lily, which requires mud, or the common sweet flag, the blue flag (*Iris versicolor*) grows thinly in the pure water, rising from the stony bottom all around the shore, where it is visited by hummingbirds in June, and the color both of its bluish blades and its flowers, and especially their reflections, are in singular harmony with the glaucous water.

White Pond and Walden are great crystals on the surface of the earth, Lakes of Light. If they were permanently congealed, and small enough to be clutched, they would, perchance, be carried off by slaves, like precious stones, to adorn the heads of emperors, but

being liquid, and ample, and secured to us and our successors forever, we disregard them, and run after the diamond of Kohinoor. They are too pure to have a market value, they contain no muck. How much more beautiful than our lives, how much more transparent than our characters, are they! We never learned meanness of them. How much fairer than the pool before the farmer's door, in which his ducks swim! Hither the clean wild ducks come. Nature has no human inhabitant who appreciates her. The birds with their plumage and their notes are in harmony with the flowers, but what youth or maiden conspires with the wild luxuriant beauty of Nature? She flourishes most alone, far from the towns where they reside. Talk of heaven! ye disgrace earth.

### *Brute Neighbors*

As I was paddling along the north shore one very calm October afternoon, for such days especially they settle on to the lakes, like the milkweed down, having looked in vain over the pond for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the shore toward the middle a few rods in front of me, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came to the surface this time, for I had helped to widen the interval, and again he laughed long and loud, with more reason than before. He manoeuvred so cunningly that I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each time, when he came to the surface, turning his head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the water and the land, and apparently chose his course so that he might come up where there was the widest expanse of water and at the greatest distance from the boat. It was surprising how quickly he made up his mind and put his resolve into execution. He led me at once to the widest part of the pond, and could not be driven from it. While he was thinking one thing in his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played on the smooth

surface of the pond, a man against a loon. Suddenly your adversary's checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again. Sometimes he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, having apparently passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he and so unweariable, that when he had swum farthest he would immediately plunge again, nevertheless; and then no wit could divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, for he had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout,—though Walden is deeper than that. How surprised must the fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools! Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swum much faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I found that it was as well for me to rest on my oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would rise, for again and again, when I was straining my eyes over the surface one way, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he invariably betray himself the moment he came up by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. I could commonly hear the splash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. But after an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly, and swam yet farther than at first. It was surprising to see how serenely he sailed off with unruffled breast when he came to the surface, doing all the work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual note was that demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like that of a water-fowl; but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his muzzle to the

ground and deliberately howls. This was his looning—perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here, making the woods ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was by this time overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface when I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, and the smoothness of the water were all against him. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered, and his god was angry with me, and so I left him disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface

For hours, in fall days, I watched the ducks cunningly tack and veer and hold the middle of the pond, far from the sportsman, tricks which they will have less need to practise in the Louisiana bayous. When compelled to rise they would sometimes circle round and round and over the pond at a considerable height from which they could easily see to other ponds and the river, like black motes in the sky, and, when I thought they had gone off thither long since, they would settle down by a slanting flight of a quarter of a mile on to a distant part which was left free, but what beside safety they get by sailing in the middle of Walden I do not know, unless they love its water for the same reason that I do

### Conclusion

I LEFT the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side, and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open

The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now.

I learned this, at least, by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary, new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him, or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost, that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them

1854

### From CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Underlying "Civil Disobedience," like Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, was fear of the growing slave power and disapproval of the Mexican War. Thoreau's characteristic individualism made him loath to support a government that countenanced slavery and war. Gandhi is said to have liked "Civil Disobedience" and printed it as a tract.

I HEARTILY accept the motto,—“That government is best which governs least”, and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—“That government is best which governs not at all”; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient, but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The

objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool, for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government,—what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man, for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this, for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished, and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone, and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India-rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way, and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but at *once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into jail once on this account, for one night, and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was a blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body, just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State was half-witted, that it was stupid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pined it.

Thus the State never intentionally confronts a man's sense, intellectual or moral, but only his body, his senses. It is not armed with superior wit or honesty, but with superior physical force. I was not born to be forced. I will breathe after my own fashion. Let us see



who is the strongest What force has a multitude? They only can force me who obey a higher law than I. They force me to become like themselves. I do not hear of *men* being forced to live this way or that by masses of men. What sort of life were that to live? When I meet a government which says to me, "Your money or your life," why should I be in haste to give it my money? It may be in a great strait, and not know what to do I cannot help  
10 that. It must help itself, do as I do. It is not worth the while to snivel about it. I am not responsible for the successful working of the machinery of society. I am not the son of the engineer I perceive that, when an acorn and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does not remain inert to make way for the other, but both obey their own laws, and spring and grow and flourish as best they can, till one, perchance, overshadows and destroys the other  
20 If a plant cannot live according to its nature, it dies, and so a man

The night in prison was novel and interesting enough The prisoners in their shirtsleeves were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said, "Come, boys, it is time to lock up", and so they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments My roommate was introduced to me by the jailer as "a first-rate fellow and a clever man." When the door was locked, he showed me where to hang my hat, and how he managed matters there The rooms were whitewashed once a month; and this one, at least, was the whitest, most simply furnished, and probably the neatest apartment in the town He naturally wanted to know where I came from, and what brought me there, and, when I had told him, I asked him in my turn  
40 how he came there, presuming him to be an honest man, of course, and, as the world goes, I believe he was "Why," said he, "they accuse me of burning a barn, but I never did it" As near as I could discover, he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there; and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man, had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on, and would have to wait as much  
50 longer, but he was quite domesticated and

contented, since he got his board for nothing, and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window, and I the other; and I saw that if one stayed there long, his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there, and examined where former prisoners had broken out, and where a grate had been sawed off, and heard the history of the various occupants of that room; for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed, which are afterward printed in a circular form, but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape, who avenged themselves by singing  
20 them.

I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as I could, for fear I should never see him again, but at length he showed me which was my bed, and left me to blow out the lamp

It was like traveling into a far country, such as I had never expected to behold, to lie there for one night It seemed to me that I never had heard the town-clock strike before, nor the evening sounds of the village, for we slept  
30 with the windows open, which were inside the grating It was to see my native village in the light of the Middle Ages, and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of knights and castles passed before me They were the voices of old burghers that I heard in the streets I was an involuntary spectator and auditor of whatever was done and said in the kitchen of the adjacent village-inn,—a wholly new and rare experience to me It was a closer  
40 view of my native town. I was fairly inside of it. I never had seen its institutions before This is one of its peculiar institutions, for it is a shire town. I began to comprehend what its inhabitants were about

In the morning, our breakfasts were put through the hole in the door, in small oblong-square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint of chocolate, with brown bread, and an iron spoon. When they called for the vessels again, I was green enough to return what bread I had left; but my comrade seized it, and said that I

should lay that up for lunch or dinner. Soon after he was let out to work at haying in a neighboring field, whither he went every day, and would not be back till noon; so he bade me good-day, saying that he doubted if he should see me again.

When I came out of prison,—for some one interfered, and paid that tax,—I did not perceive that great changes had taken place on the common, such as he observed who went in a youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed man, and yet a change had to my eyes come over the scene,—the town, and State, and country,—greater than any that mere time could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the State in which I lived. I saw to what extent the people among whom I lived could be trusted as good neighbors and friends, that their friendship was for summer weather only, that they did not greatly propose to do right, that they were a distinct race from me by their prejudices and superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays are, that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran no risks, not even to their property, that after all they were not so noble but they treated the thief as he had treated them, and hoped, by a certain outward observance and a few prayers, and by walking in a particular straight though useless path from time to time, to save their souls. This may be to judge my neighbors harshly, for I believe that many of them are not aware that they have such an institution as the jail in their village.

It was formerly the custom in our village, when a poor debtor came out of jail, for his acquaintances to salute him, looking through their fingers, which were crossed to represent the grating of a jail window, "How do ye do?" My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first looked at me, and then at one another, as if I had returned from a long journey. I was put in jail as I was going to the shoemaker's to get a shoe which was mended. When I was let out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my errand, and, having put on my mended

shoe, joined a huckleberry party, who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct; and in half an hour,—for the horse was soon tackled,—was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then the State was nowhere to be seen.

This is the whole history of "My Prisons."

The authority of government, even such as I am willing to submit to,—for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do so well,—is still an impure one. To be strictly just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor, which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

1819 ~ *James Russell Lowell* ~ 1891

OF THE Concord and Cambridge groups, the former was the more original and radical, the latter more academic and its literary work of a more traditional type. James Russell Lowell was thought by his contemporaries to be the ablest of the Cambridge group.

Lowell, the youngest of six children, was born February 22, 1819, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at "Elmwood," a house of Revolutionary fame. His family belonged to the lettered class of New England and was one of unusual distinction. Many of his ancestors were clergymen. His grandfather, a prominent judge, was instrumental in ending slavery in Massachusetts. An uncle introduced cotton spinning into the United States and founded the city of Lowell. Another uncle established at Boston the Lowell Institute of free lectures on science, religion, and art. The poet's father, an eminent Unitarian clergyman for more than fifty years, was pastor of the West Church of Boston. President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, his brother Percival Lowell, the astronomer, and the poet, Amy Lowell, were of the same ancestral stock.

From infancy Lowell was familiar with books, for the Lowell library was made up of the accumulations of several generations of scholarly men. He was early acquainted with Spenser and Shakespeare. He prepared for college at the school of an Englishman under whom Dr. Holmes and Colonel Higginson also studied. In 1834 he entered Harvard, but he was not a very serious undergraduate. In those days when miscellaneous reading was not so common as it is now, he read "nearly everything," he said, "except the books prescribed by the faculty." While Lowell was a sophomore, Longfellow came to Cambridge to succeed Ticknor as professor of modern languages, and his coming gave great stimulus to literary interests. In his junior year, Lowell was elected to write a college poem. As a senior, he was made editor of *Harvardiana*, the college magazine. Some of the verses he wrote for it were good enough to be included in the final editions of his poems. He was elected poet for his class, that of 1838, but his poem was read for him at the graduation exercises in August, since he had been "rusticated" to Concord for six weeks for neglect of college duties and such minor delinquencies as not attending chapel. Here he studied with the original of Parson Wilbur of the *Biglow Papers* and came to know Emerson.

After his graduation, Lowell began the study of law and took his degree from the Law School in 1840. He soon became engaged to Maria White of Watertown, who was an ardent abolitionist and a mild transcendentalist, and was devoted to poetry.

Stimulated by her interests, Lowell soon formed a more definite idea of what he wanted to do. He continued to write, and at twenty-two published his first volume of verse, *A Year's Life* (1841). In 1843 he founded with a friend the *Pioneer*, a magazine of literature and art, which was discontinued after a few issues, leaving its editors in debt. At the end of the year he issued another volume of poems. He married in 1844. After a winter in Philadelphia, he returned to Elmwood, his home for almost all the rest of his life.

The next six years were the most productive of his career. As a youth he was relatively radical and associated himself with reformers and romantic idealists. In 1845 he began to write for various antislavery papers. His first volume of prose, *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*, appeared in 1846. In 1848 he published another volume of his poems and also his first and most distinctive masterpiece, the *Biglow Papers*, First Series, a satire in New England dialect which seems likely to live in American political history. In it he set forth his criticism of the conduct of the national government in the Mexican War. An elaborate setting was added when the various poems were collected and placed together, and the Yankee idyl, "The Courtin'," appeared with them in an appendix. The year 1848 was, in fact, his great poetic year. The literary satire, *A Fable for Critics*, containing humorous estimates of his contemporaries, was published then and also his best-known imaginative poem, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*. The latter is not notable in comparison with other Arthurian poems of the century, but it has been a moral force in the schools. About this same time he began his long and successful career as a public speaker on social and academic themes.

Mrs. Lowell died in 1853. Two years later Lowell gave the Lowell lectures, on the English poets, and as a result was appointed to succeed Longfellow in the Smith professorship of modern languages at Harvard. He went alone to Europe, 1855-56, and then assumed his position of professor of French, Spanish, and Belles-Lettres, engaging in the direction of the department for twenty years. After he joined the Harvard faculty he rather disowned his early radicalism, and in his maturer years became increasingly conservative. Lowell was described by his students as not a typical professor. He was less formal and less methodical than Longfellow. Endowed with encyclopedic learning, he had also a sense of humor, a real gift for poetry, and a stimulating imagination.

In 1857, Lowell was made editor of the newly established *Atlantic Monthly*, which had Emerson, Motley, Holmes, and other members of the famous Saturday Club as contributors. He achieved eminence at once as an admirable editor, and the magazine exerted influence politically and in matters of taste. Lowell contributed to it much of his own critical writing and other prose and verse as well. That same year he returned again to Elmwood, after having married Miss Frances Dunlap (died 1885), who had been his daughter's governess. After two years, he resigned

the direction of the *Atlantic* and two years later, in 1864, became editor with Professor Charles Eliot Norton of the *North American Review*, a post he held until his resignation in 1872.

During the Civil War period he wrote the second series of *Biglow Papers*, less spontaneous than the first. Issued in 1862-66, they reflected his views concerning the War. His "Commemoration Ode," composed in memory of the Harvard men who had fallen in the struggle, was first printed in the *Atlantic*. During his professorship he collected into volumes his various prose pieces, many of them made over from classroom lectures. Among them were his once famous essays on Dante, Spenser, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Keats. He was given an honorary degree by Oxford in 1873 and by Cambridge in 1874.

During a two years' vacation in Europe following his resignation from the *North American Review*, Lowell became interested in the contrasting problems of American public life and those in Europe. He soon became known as a political thinker, and as a reward for party service, he was appointed United States minister to Spain in 1877. Here his already great sympathy with the Spanish people and their literature deepened. Three years later he was made minister to England, 1880-85, where he came in contact with distinguished people and made a strong impression as a statesman, a man of letters, and an interpreter of America to Europe. He was much in demand as a lecturer for special public events. His speeches were spiced with wit and fitted to the occasion, and he had genuine subject matter besides. He returned to America in 1885. The remaining six years of his life were devoted to public speaking, editing the collected edition of his poetry and prose, and publishing a few more poems, essays, and addresses. Among them was "Democracy," an address delivered in England, and "The Independent in Politics," delivered on his return to America. In 1887 he again gave the Lowell lectures. He published *Heartsease and Rue* in 1888. His political essays appeared in 1891. Little was left of the young radical in these later discussions of public affairs, and he had lost much of his enthusiasm for democracy. He died at Elmwood on August 12, 1891, at the age of seventy-two. His last volume, *Old English Dramatists*, was published the year following his death.

Part of Lowell's apparent inconsistency is the result of the fact that his mind developed and changed as he grew older, a fact that is reflected in the history of his literary theories and ideals as interpreted by H. H. Clark. Up to 1850 he thought that "any literature, as far as it is national, is diseased," and during that period he condemned traditionalism and exalted the universal moral sentiment as a corrective of social and local wrongs such as slavery. In his second period, from 1850 to 1867, he urged that our literature should be nationalistic, preferably in local dialect. And after 1867, becoming more respectful of traditionalism, he turned to a universalism which includes and begins with nationalism but transcends it. He summed up his ideal in his essay on Spenser (1875): "All great poetry must smack of the soil, for

it is rooted in it, must suck life and substance from it, but it must do so with the aspiring instinct of the pine that climbs forever toward diviner air, and not in the grovelling fashion of the potato. Any verse that makes you and me foreigners is not only not great poetry, but no poetry at all." As Norman Foerster has shown, Lowell thought that form should be organic and distinguished for unity, design, proportion, clearness, economy, repose, and impersonality. To him the ideal representation of life, which constitutes great literature, was to be achieved by the spiritual imagination, guided by reason and our cultural heritage, which finds in the chaos of experience an ordered ethical meaning and significance. The function of literature is to further the delight and happiness which derives from the joyful exercise of all the faculties of the mind and spirit working in harmony. In his own writing he seldom succeeded in practicing fully his own theories, but they provided criteria for his own critical essays which did much to interpret and evaluate the great European masters for a frontier people.

Lowell was a poet, author, teacher, public servant, man of the world, man of letters, wit, scholar, orator, critic, essayist, editor, diplomat, and professor. Some have termed him the "largest, best rounded personality in our literature," the "most representative of the Cambridge group," and "our noblest patriot and most completely rounded man." But though he dealt with a wide range of ideas and was influenced by various intellectual and social movements, he was a leader in none. He was too much a man of the library, and he suffered perhaps from his very versatility. He put forward no definite body of ideas and left no *magnum opus*. His work is so miscellaneous that it has little unity of effect.

As a poet, Lowell has worn less well than others of the Cambridge and Concord groups. He composed no one poem as popular as Holmes's "The Chambered Nautilus." His early verse followed conventional sources of inspiration. As the years passed, he tried many fields. A rough grouping of his verse includes poems of love and sentiment; personal and social verse; patriotic poems and poems of contemporary life and thought; nature poems descriptive of the flora and fauna of his own region; dialect poems and political satires (the only group in which he achieved a distinctive manner), and a narrative poem, "The Vision of Sir Launfal." His poetry was written principally from 1840 to 1870 and his prose from 1869 to 1890.

Lowell's prose, a literary miscellany, reflects his broad reading, resources of vocabulary, exuberant fancy, and the interests of a lecturer and editor. As a literary critic he ranked high in his own day, and he still ranks as our most distinguished critic-scholar. Some of his judgments, like those on Thoreau, Darwin, and Taine, seem now to require modification; but he had historical background, he understood the nature of criticism, and he outlined sound criteria. He left an impressive series of studies of great writers of the past, English and European. His political essays, too, now seem better reading than they did earlier in the present century.

When Lowell died, American romanticism was past. French and Russian realism were shaping the taste of a new generation. Individualism had triumphed and older literary traditions were being rapidly discarded.

Lowell's collected works were published in the Riverside Edition (10 vols., 1891). Another volume was added in the following year and the two volumes of H. E. Scudder's *Life* in 1902. The Elmwood Edition of Lowell's *Complete Writings* was published in 16 volumes in 1904. The *Letters*, edited by C. E. Norton, appeared in 1894 (enlarged, 1904). *New Letters*, edited by M. A. De Wolfe Howe, was issued in 1932.

Scudder's remains the standard biography of Lowell. F. H. Underwood published *J. R. Lowell: A Biographical Sketch* (1882), Emma E. Brown, *Life of Lowell* (1887), and Ferris Green-slet, *J. R. Lowell: His Life and Work*, a brief but valuable account in American Men of Letters Series (1905). M. A. De Wolfe Howe wrote of Lowell in *DAB*, XI (1933). E. E. Hale's *J. R. Lowell and His Friends* (1899) and E. W. Emerson's *The Early Years of the Saturday Club* (1918) are of interest to students of Lowell.

For selected critical discussion, see Poe's "Poems by James Russell Lowell," *Graham's Magazine* (March, 1844), and his review of "A Fable for Critics," *Southern Literary Messenger* (Feb., 1849); E. C. Stedman, in *Poets of America* (1885); Henry James, in the *Atlantic*, LIX (Jan., 1892), also included in *Essays in London and Elsewhere* (1893); Barrett Wendell, in *Stelliger and Other Essays* (1893); C. E. Norton, in *Harper's Magazine*, LXXXVI (May, 1893); J. V. Cheney, in *That Dome in Air* (1895); G. E. Woodberry, in *Makers of Literature* (1900); W. C. Brownell, in *American Prose Masters* (1909); Van Wyck Brooks, in *America's Coming of Age* (1915); J. J. Reilly, *J. R. Lowell as a Critic* (1915); E. M. Chapman, "The Biglow Papers Fifty Years After," *Yale Review*, N.S. VI (Oct., 1916); A. H. Thorndike, in *CHAL*, II (1918); W. R. Thayer, "Lowell as a Teacher," *Scribner's Magazine*, LXVIII (Oct., 1920); Bliss Perry, in *The Praise of Folly* (1923); N. Foerster, in *Nature in American Literature* (1923), and in *American Criticism* (1928); H. H. Clark, "Lowell's Criticism of Romantic Literature," *PMLA*, XLI (March, 1926), and "Lowell—Humanitarian, Nationalist, or Humanist?" *Studies in Philology*, XXVIII (1930); V. L. Parrington, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, II (1927); Alfred Kreymborg, in *Our Singing Strength* (1929); R. M. Lovett, in *Macy's American Writers on American Literature* (1931); R. Brenner, in *Twelve American Poets before 1900* (1933).

Among British articles on Lowell may be mentioned two unsigned contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*, CLXXIV (Oct., 1891) and CXCI (Jan., 1900); R. E. Roberts, "J. R. Lowell, a British Estimate," *Living Age*, CCCI (Jan., 1900); F. W. Farrar, "An English Estimate of Lowell," *Forum*, XII (Oct., 1891), and Sidney Low, "Lowell in His Poetry," *Fortnightly Review*, O.S. LVI (Sept., 1891).

For bibliography see G. W. Cooke, *A Bibliography of James Russell Lowell* (1906); Killis Campbell, "Bibliographical Notes on Lowell," *University of Texas Studies in English*, IV (1924); L. S. Livingston, *A Bibliography of the First Editions in Book Form of the Writings of J. R. Lowell* (1914); Irita Van Doren, in *CHAL*, II (1918), and Harry Hartwick, in W. F. Taylor's *A History of American Letters* (1936).

#### From SONNETS

Lowell's early sonnets are well and smoothly executed. There were thirty-five in his first book. He commented on this lyric type when praising Longfellow's sonnets, on the occasion of the un-

veiling of a bust of that poet at Westminster Abbey, March 2, 1884. "I have been struck particularly with this quality of style in some of my late friend's sonnets, which seem to me in unity and evenness of flow among the most beautiful and perfect we have in the language. They re-

mind one of those cabinets in which all the drawers are opened at once by the turn of a key in a single lock, whereas we all have seen sonnets with a lock in every line with a different key to each, and the added conundrums of secret drawers "

## III

I would not have this perfect love of ours  
Grow from a single root, a single stem,  
Bearing no goodly fruit, but only flowers  
That idly hide life's iron diadem  
It should grow alway like that Eastern tree  
Whose limbs take root and spread forth constantly;  
That love for one, from which there doth not  
spring  
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing  
Not in another world, as poets prate,  
Dwell we apart above the tide of things, 10  
High floating o'er earth's clouds on faery  
wings,  
But our pure love doth ever elevate  
Into a holy bond of brotherhood  
All earthly things, making them pure and  
good

1840

## IV

"For this true nobleness I seek in vain  
In woman and in man I find it not,  
I almost weary of my earthly lot,  
My life-springs are dried up with burning  
pain."  
Thou find'st it not? I pray thee look again,  
Look *unward* through the depths of thine own  
soul  
How is it with thee? Art thou sound and  
whole?  
Doth narrow search show thee no earthly  
stain?  
BE NOBLE! and the nobleness that lies  
In other men, sleeping, but never dead, 10  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own;  
Then wilt thou see it gleam in many eyes,  
Then wilt pure light around thy path be shed,  
And thou wilt nevermore be sad and lone

1840

## STANZAS ON FREEDOM

Lowell early showed humanitarian interest. He was active as an abolitionist for some years after 1840. These verses were sung at an anti-slavery picnic in Dedham, on the anniversary of

the West Indian emancipation, Aug. 1, 1843. In a letter to a friend, 1846, Lowell told that when he was printing his second volume of verse, he was urged to suppress this poem "My only answer was—'Let all the others be suppressed if you will—that I will never suppress.'" The last two lines of the poem have been widely quoted

MEN! whose boast it is that ye  
Come of fathers brave and free,  
If there breathe on earth a slave,  
Are ye truly free and brave?  
If ye do not feel the chain,  
When it works a brother's pain,  
Are ye not base slaves indeed,  
Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Women! who shall one day bear  
Sons to breathe New England air, 10  
If ye hear, without a blush,  
Deeds to make the roused blood rush  
Like red lava through your veins,  
For your sisters now in chains,—  
Answer! are ye fit to be  
Mothers of the brave and free?

Is true Freedom but to break  
Fetters for our own dear sake,  
And, with leathern hearts, forget  
That we owe mankind a debt? 20  
Nol true freedom is to share  
All the chains our brothers wear,  
And, with heart and hand, to be  
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak  
For the fallen and the weak,  
They are slaves who will not choose  
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,  
Rather than in silence shrink  
From the truths they needs must think, 30  
They are slaves who dare not be  
In the right with two or three.

1843

## RHŒCUS

Printed in Lowell's first book, *A Year of Life*. The legend goes back to Greek sources of the fifth century. The influence of Keats, whom Lowell admired, is strong in this poem and in "A Legend of Brittany." In 1840 he contemplated writing a life of Keats. In 1841 he wrote a sonnet "To the Spirit of Keats." The serious prefatory paragraphs



show that the poet's purpose in his pagan fable was not merely to please. He had a moral (lines 138-139) in mind as well. Another poem on the story of Rhœcus, "The Hamadryad" by Walter Savage Landor, was published not long after Lowell's

God sends his teachers unto every age,  
To every clime, and every race of men,  
With revelations fitted to their growth  
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of  
Truth

Into the selfish rule of one sole race  
Therefore each form of worship that hath  
swayed

The life of man, and given it to grasp  
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,  
Enfolds some germs of goodness and of  
right,

Else never had the eager soul, which loathes  
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,  
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest

There is an instinct in the human heart  
Which makes that all the fables it hath coined,  
To justify the reign of its belief  
And strengthen it by beauty's right divine,  
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,  
Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful hands,  
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth  
For, as in nature naught is made in vain, 20  
But all things have within their hull of use  
A wisdom and a meaning which may speak  
Of spiritual secrets to the ear  
Of spirit, so, in whatsoe'er the heart  
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,  
To make its inspirations suit its creed,  
And from the niggard hands of falsehood  
wring

Its needful food of truth, there ever is  
A sympathy with Nature, which reveals,  
Not less than her own works, pure gleams of  
light

And earnest parables of inward lore  
Hear now this fairy legend of old Greece,  
As full of gracious youth, and beauty still  
As the immortal freshness of that grace  
Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in the  
wood,  
Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,  
And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,

He propped its gray trunk with admiring  
care,  
And with a thoughtless footstep loitered  
on.

But, as he turned, he heard a voice behind  
That murmured "Rhœcus!" 'Twas as if the  
leaves,  
Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured  
it,

And, while he paused bewildered, yet again  
It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a breeze.  
He started and beheld with dizzy eyes  
What seemed the substance of a happy dream  
Stand there before him, spreading a warm  
glow

Within the green glooms of the shadowy oak.  
It seemed a woman's shape, yet far too fair 50  
To be a woman, and with eyes too meek  
For any that were wont to mate with gods  
All naked like a goddess stood she there,  
And like a goddess all too beautiful  
To feel the guilt-born earthliness of shame  
"Rhœcus, I am the Dryad<sup>1</sup> of this tree,"  
Thus she began, dropping her low-toned  
words

Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of dew,  
"And with it I am doomed to live and die,  
The rain and sunshine are my caterers, 60  
Nor have I other bliss than simple life,  
Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can give,  
And with a thankful joy it shall be thine "

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the heart,  
Yet, by the prompting of such beauty, bold,  
Answered "What is there that can satisfy  
The endless craving of the soul but love?  
Give me thy love, or but the hope of that  
Which must be evermore my spirit's goal "  
After a little pause she said again, 70  
But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,  
"I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;  
An hour before the sunset meet me here "  
And straightway there was nothing he could  
see

But the green glooms beneath the shadowy  
oak,

And not a sound came to his straining ears  
But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,  
And far away upon an emerald slope  
The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe

<sup>1</sup> wood nymph

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,  
Men did not think that happy things were  
dreams 81

Because they overstepped the narrow bourn  
Of likelihood, but reverently deemed  
Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful  
To be the guerdon of a daring heart  
So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,  
And all along unto the city's gate  
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he  
walked,

The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its  
wont, 89

And he could scarce believe he had not wings,  
Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his  
veins

Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,  
But one that in the present dwelt too much,  
And, taking with blithe welcome whatso'er  
Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in  
that,

Like the contented peasant of a vale,  
Deemed it the world, and never looked be-  
yond

So, haply meeting in the afternoon 99  
Some comrades who were playing at the dice,  
He joined them and forgot all else beside

The dice were rattling at the merriest,  
And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,  
Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,  
When through the room there hummed a  
yellow bee

That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped  
legs

As if to light And Rhœcus laughed and said,  
Feeling how red and flushed he was with  
loss,

"By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"

And brushed him off with rough, impatient  
hand 110

But still the bee came back, and thrice again  
Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath  
Then through the window flew the wounded  
bee,

And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,  
Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly  
Against the red disc of the setting sun,—  
And instantly the blood sank from his heart,  
As if its very walls had caved away.

Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,  
Ran madly through the city and the gate,  
And o'er the plain, which now the wood's  
long shade, 121  
By the low sun thrown forward broad and  
dim,  
Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall

Quite spent and out of breath he reached  
the tree,

And, listening fearfully, he heard once more  
The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at  
hand

Whereat he looked around him, but could  
see

Naught but the deepening glooms beneath  
the oak.

Then sighed the voice, "Oh, Rhœcus! never-  
more

Shalt thou behold me or by day or night, 130  
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with  
a love

More ripe and bounteous than ever yet  
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart.  
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,  
And sent'st him back to me with bruised  
wings

We spirits only show to gentle eyes  
We ever ask an undivided love,  
And he who scorns the least of Nature's  
works

Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all  
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more "

Then Rhœcus beat his breast, and groaned  
aloud 141

And cried, "Be pitiful forgive me yet  
Thus once, and I shall never need it more!"  
"Alas!" the voice returned, "'tis thou art  
blind,<sup>1</sup>

Not I unmerciful, I can forgive,  
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes,  
Only the soul hath power o'er itself."  
With that again there murmured "Never-  
more!"

And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,  
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,  
Like the long surf upon a distant shore, 151  
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down

<sup>1</sup> In one form of the legend, the dryad blinded  
Rhœcus by way of retribution

The night had gathered round him: o'er the  
plan

The city sparkled with its thousand lights,  
And sounds of revel fell upon his ear  
Harshly and like a curse, above, the sky,  
With all its bright sublimity of stars,  
Deepened, and on his forehead smote the  
breeze;

Beauty was all around him and delight,  
But from that eve he was alone on earth 160

1843

### THE PRESENT CRISIS

Printed in the *Boston Courier*, Dec 11, 1848,  
under the title "Verses Suggested at the Present  
Crisis." The crisis concerned the question of the  
annexation of Texas and the extension of slave  
territory. The long lines of the verse form may  
have been suggested by Tennyson's "Locksley  
Hall" (1842). Underlying the poem is the idea of  
the onward sweep of progress and of the necessity of  
action. The poem was at once popular and it was  
widely quoted for years in public speeches by  
such men as G. W. Curtis, Wendell Phillips, and  
Charles Sumner.

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom, through  
the broad earth's aching breast  
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on  
from east to west,  
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the  
soul within him climb  
To the swiftness of manhood, as the energy  
sublime  
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the  
thorny stem of Time

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots  
the instantaneous throe,  
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's  
systems to and fro,  
At the birth of each new Era, with a recog-  
nizing start,  
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with  
mute lips apart,  
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child  
leaps beneath the Future's heart 10

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror  
and a chill,  
Under continent to continent, the sense of  
coming ill,

And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his  
sympathies with God

In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be  
drunk up by the sod,  
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving  
in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an in-  
stinct bears along,  
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift  
flash of right or wrong,  
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Hu-  
manity's vast frame  
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the  
gush of joy or shame,—  
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have  
equal claim 20

Once to every man and nation comes the  
moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for  
the good or evil side,  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offer-  
ing each the bloom or blight,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the  
sheep upon the right,  
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that  
darkness and that light

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose  
party thou shalt stand,  
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes  
the dust against our land?  
Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis  
Truth alone is strong,  
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see  
around her throng  
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshroud  
her from all wrong. 30

Backward look across the ages and the  
beacon-moments see,  
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut  
through Oblivion's sea,  
Not an ear in court or market for the low  
foreboding cry  
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers,  
from whose feet earth's chaff must fly,  
Never shows the choice momentous till the  
judgment hath passed by

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's  
pages but record  
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old  
systems and the Word;  
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong for-  
ever on the throne,—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, be-  
hind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping  
watch above his own 40

We see dimly in the Present what is small  
and what is great,  
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the  
iron helm of fate,  
But the soul is still oracular, amid the market's  
din,  
Lest the ominous stern whisper from the  
Delphic cave within,—  
"They enslave their children's children who  
make compromise with sin "

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops,<sup>1</sup> fellest of  
the giant brood,  
Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who  
have drenched the earth with blood,  
Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by  
our purer day,  
Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his  
miserable prey,—  
Shall we guide his gory fingers where our  
helpless children play? 50

Then to side with Truth is noble when we  
share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis  
prosperous to be just,  
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the  
coward stands aside,  
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is  
crucified,  
And the multitude make virtue of the faith  
they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,—they  
were souls that stood alone,  
While the men they agonized for hurled the  
contumelious stone,  
Stood serene, and down the future saw the  
golden beam incline

<sup>1</sup> one of a failed race of one-eyed giants, said to have lived in Sicily

To the side of perfect justice, mastered by  
their faith divine,  
By one man's plain truth to manhood and  
to God's supreme design. 60

By the light of burning heretics Christ's  
bleeding feet I track,  
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross  
that turns not back,  
And these mounts of anguish number how  
each generation learned  
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in  
prophet-hearts hath burned  
Since the first man stood God-conquered with  
his face to heaven upturned

For Humanity sweeps onward where to-  
day the martyr stands,  
On the morrow crouches Judas with the  
silver in his hands,  
Far in front the cross stands ready and the  
crackling fagots burn,  
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent  
awe return  
To glean up the scattered ashes into His-  
tory's golden urn 70

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle  
slaves  
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our  
father's graves,  
Worshippers of light ancestral make the  
present light a crime,—  
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards,  
steered by men behind their time?  
Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that  
make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old  
iconoclasts,  
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue  
was the Past's,  
But we make their truth our falsehood, think-  
ing that hath made us free,  
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while  
our tender spirits flee  
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which  
drove them across the sea 80

They have rights who dare maintain them,  
we are traitors to our sires,  
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's  
new-lit altar-fires,

Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we,  
 in our haste to slay,  
 From the tombs of the old prophets steal the  
 funeral lamps away  
 To light up the martyr-fagots round the  
 prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties, Time makes  
 ancient good uncouth,  
 They must upward still, and onward, who  
 would keep abreast of Truth,  
 Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we our-  
 selves must Pilgrims be,  
 Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly  
 through the desperate winter sea,  
 Nor attempt the Future's portal with the  
 Past's blood-rusted key

1844

1845

### TO THE DANDELION

Published in *Graham's Magazine*, January, 1845  
 It follows the standard pattern of old-world  
 flower poems, from which Emerson broke loose in  
 "The Rhodora" as Wordsworth had in "I Wandered  
 Lonely" The flower is not an individual  
 flower, blooming in some special spot The poet  
 apostrophizes it in the abstract, and finds a lesson  
 for himself as he contemplates it The rich allu-  
 siveness of the poem is noteworthy

DEAR common flower, that grow'st beside  
 the way,  
 Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,  
 First pledge of blithesome May,  
 Which children pluck, and, full of pride, up-  
 hold,  
 High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that  
 they  
 An Eldorado<sup>1</sup> in the grass have found,  
 Which not the rich earth's ample round  
 May match in wealth,—thou art more dear  
 to me  
 Than all the prouder summer-blooms may  
 be

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish  
 prow  
 Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,  
 Nor wrinkled the lean brow

<sup>1</sup> a fabled land of gold, thought by early Spanish  
 explorers to be in South America

Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease,  
 'Tis the spring's largess,<sup>1</sup> which she scat-  
 ters now  
 To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,  
 Though most hearts never understand  
 To take it at God's value, but pass by  
 The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy,  
 To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime, 20  
 The eyes thou givest me  
 Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:  
 Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed<sup>2</sup> bee  
 Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment  
 In the white lily's breezy tent,  
 His fragrant Sybars,<sup>3</sup> than I, when first  
 From the dark green thy yellow circles  
 burst

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,  
 Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,  
 Where, as the breezes pass, 30  
 The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,  
 Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,  
 Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue  
 That from the distance sparkle through  
 Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,  
 Where one white cloud like a stray lamb  
 doth move

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked  
 with thee,  
 The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,  
 Who, from the dark old tree  
 Beside the door, sang clearly all day long, 40  
 And I, secure in childish piety,  
 Listened as if I heard an angel sing  
 With news from heaven, which he could  
 bring  
 Fresh every day to my untainted ears,  
 When birds and flowers and I were happy  
 peers

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,  
 When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!  
 Thou teachest me to deem  
 More sacredly of every human heart,  
 Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam 50  
 Of heaven and, could some wondrous secret  
 show

Did we but pay the love we owe,

<sup>1</sup> free and liberal gift    <sup>2</sup> with a breastplate of gold  
<sup>3</sup> ancient Southern Italian town, noted for its luxury

And with a child's undoubting wisdom  
look  
On all these living pages of God's book.

1845

### From A FABLE FOR CRITICS

Pope's *Dunciad*, Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and Leigh Hunt's *The Feast of the Poets*, all satirizing contemporary men of letters, may have suggested to Lowell the rollicking, effervescent verse criticism of his *Fable for Critics*. The elaborate title page of the first edition reads "Reader! walk up at once (it will soon be too late), and huy at a perfectly ruinous rate A FABLE FOR CRITICS or, better, (I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike, an old-fashioned title-page, such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents.) A Glance at a Few of Our Literary Progenies (Mrs Malaprop's word) from the Tuh of Diogenes, a vocal and musical melody, that is, a series of jokes by a Wonderful Quiz, who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace, on the top of the tub Set forth in October, the 31st day, in the year '48, G P Putnam, Broadway." In the introduction Lowell said "One word to such readers (judicious and wise) as read books with something behind the mere eyes, of whom in this country, perhaps, there are two, including myself, gentle reader, and you. All the characters sketched in this slight *jeu d'esprit*, though, it may be, they seem, here and there, rather free, and drawn from a somewhat too cynical standpoint, are *meant* to be faithful, for that is the grand point, and none hut an owl would feel sore at a rub from a jester who tells you, without any subterfuge, that he sits in Diogenes' tub."

"THERE comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,  
Are like gold nails in temples<sup>1</sup> to hang trophies on,  
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,  
Is some of it pr— No, 'us not even prose, I'm speaking of meters, some poems have welled  
From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;  
They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a pin,  
In creating, the only hard thing's to begin,

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastes 12 11

A grass-blade's no easier to make than an oak,  
If you've once found the way, you've achieved the grand stroke,  
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,  
But thrown in a heap with a crash and a clatter,  
Now it is not one thing nor another alone  
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,  
The something pervading, uniting the whole,  
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,  
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you  
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue,  
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves, singly perfect may be,  
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree

"But to come back to Emerson (whom by the way,  
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,  
A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range  
Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange,<sup>1</sup>  
He seems, to my thinking, (although I'm afraid  
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),  
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's gold mist  
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist,  
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got  
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what,  
For though he builds glorious temples, 'us odd  
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god  
'Tis refreshing to old-fashioned people like me,  
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,

<sup>1</sup> Lowell says that Emerson combined spirituality and idealism (Olympus was the home of the gods in Greek mythology) with Yankee shrewdness and practicality (the Exchange is the business mart, the Stock Exchange)

In whose mind all creation is duly respected  
As parts of himself—just a little projected;  
And who's willing to worship the stars and  
the sun,

A convert to—nothing but Emerson  
So perfect a balance there is in his head,  
That he talks of things sometimes as if they  
were dead; 40

Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that  
sort,

He looks at as merely ideas, in short,  
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cab-  
inet,

Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere  
dab in it,

Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture  
her,

Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine  
parts pure lecturer,

You are filled with delight at his clear demon-  
stration,

Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occa-  
sion,

With the quiet precision of science he'll sort  
'em,

But you can't help suspecting the whole a  
*post mortem*. 50

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's  
make and style,

Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and  
Carlyle,

To compare him with Plato would be vastly  
fairer,

Carlyle's the more burly, but E is the rarer,  
He sees fewer objects, but clearer, truer,

If C's as original, E's more peculiar;  
That he's more of a man you might say of  
the one,

Of the other he's more of an Emerson,  
C's the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb,—

E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim, 60  
The one's two-thirds Norseman, the other half  
Greek,

Where the one's most abounding, the other's  
to seek,

C's generals<sup>1</sup> require to be seen in the mass—  
E's specialities<sup>2</sup> gain if enlarged by the glass,

C. gives nature and God his own fits of the  
blues,

<sup>1</sup> generalisations      <sup>2</sup> specific points

And rims common-sense things with mystical  
hues,—

E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,  
And looks coolly around him with sharp  
common sense,

C shows you how everyday matters unite  
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—

While E., in a plain, preternatural way, 71  
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day,  
C. draws all his characters quite à la Fuseli,—

Not sketching their bundles of muscles and  
throws illy,

But he paints with a brush so untamed and  
profuse,

They seem nothing but bundles of muscles  
and thews,

E is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and  
severe,

And a colorless outline, but full, round, and  
clear,—

To the men he thinks worthy he frankly  
accords

The design of a white marble statue in words  
C labors to get at the center, and then 81  
Take a reckoning from there of his actions  
and men,

E. calmly assumes the said center as granted,  
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted

"He has imitators in scores, who omit

No part of the man but his wisdom and wit,—  
Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his  
brain,

And when he has skimmed it once, skim it  
again;

If at all they resemble him, you may be sure  
it is

Because their shoals mirror his mists and ob-  
scurities, 90

As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a  
minute,

While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected  
within it

. . . . .

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as  
dignified,

As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is  
ignited,

Save when by reflection 'tis kindled o' nights  
With a semblance of flame by the chill  
Northern Lights.

He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of  
 your nation,  
 (There's no doubt that he stands in supreme  
 isolation),  
 Your topmost Parnassus<sup>1</sup> he may set his heel  
 on,  
 But no warm applauses come, peal follow-  
 ing peal on,— 100  
 He's too smooth and too polished to hang  
 any zeal on  
 Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose,  
 he has 'em,  
 But he lacks the one merit of kindling en-  
 thusiasm,  
 If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,  
 Like being stirred up with the very North  
 Pole

"He is very nice reading in summer, but  
*inter*

*Nos*,<sup>2</sup> we don't want *extra* freezing in winter,  
 Take him up in the depth of July, my advice is,  
 When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices,  
 But, deduct all you can, there's enough that's  
 right good in him, 110  
 He has a true soul for field, river, and wood  
 in him,  
 And his heart, in the midst of brick walls, or  
 where'er it is,  
 Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest  
 charities—  
 To you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden  
 planet?  
 No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their lime-  
 stone and granite.  
 If you're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here)  
*despis*,<sup>3</sup>  
 You will get of his outermost heart (as I  
 guess) a piece,  
 But you'd get deeper down if you came as  
 a precipice,  
 And would break the last seal of its inwardest  
 fountain,  
 If you only could palm yourself off for a  
 mountain. 120

<sup>1</sup> Grecian mountain, sacred to Apollo and the muses,  
 hence, the home of music and poetry <sup>2</sup> among our-  
 selves <sup>3</sup> "If you're one who 'on suitable occasion  
 can be foolish." Lowell adds a punning allusion to  
 the Locofocos, a radical wing of the Democratic party,  
 who held a convention by the light of the newly in-  
 vented locofoco matches.

Mr. Quivis,<sup>1</sup> or somebody quite as discerning,  
 Some scholar who's hourly expecting his  
 learning,  
 Calls B the American Wordsworth; but  
 Wordsworth  
 Is worth near as much as your whole tuneful  
 herd's worth.  
 No, don't be absurd, he's an excellent Bry-  
 ant;  
 But, my friends, you'll endanger the life of  
 your client,  
 By attempting to stretch him up into a giant.  
 If you choose to compare him, I think there  
 are two per-  
 sons fit for a parallel!—Thomson and Cowper,<sup>2</sup>  
 I don't mean exactly,—there's something of  
 each, 130  
 There's T's love of nature, C.'s penchant to  
 preach,  
 Just mix up their minds so that C.'s spice of  
 craziness  
 Shall balance and neutralize T's turn for  
 laziness,  
 And it gives you a brain cool, quite friction-  
 less, quiet,  
 Whose internal police nips the buds of all  
 riot,—  
 A brain like a permanent strait-jacket put on  
 The heart which strives vainly to burst off a  
 button,—  
 A brain which, without being slow or me-  
 chanic,  
 Does more than a larger less drilled, more  
 volcanic;  
 He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness  
 bitten, 140  
 And the advantage that Wordsworth before  
 him had written.

"But, my dear little hardlings, don't prick  
 up your ears,  
 Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as  
 peers,  
 If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say  
 There is *nothing* in that which is grand, in  
 its way,

<sup>1</sup> anyone, cf "Mr Whomst"

<sup>2</sup> "To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-  
 versely absurd 'tis to sound this name *Cowper*,  
 As people in general call him named *super*,  
 I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-  
 trooper" [Lowell's note.]



He is almost the one of your poets that knows  
How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in  
Repose;

If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to  
mar

His thought's modest fulness by going too  
far,

'Twould be well if your authors should all  
make a trial 150

Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,  
And measure their writings by Hesiod's  
staff,

Which teaches that all has less value than half

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and  
vehement heart

Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker  
apart,

And reveals the live Man, still supreme and  
erect,

Underneath the bemummifying wrappers of  
sect,

There was ne'er a man born who had more of  
the swing

Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of  
thing,

And his failures arise (though he seem not  
to know it) 160

From the very same cause that has made him  
a poet,—

A fervor of mind which knows no separation  
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspira-

tion,  
As my Pythoness<sup>1</sup> erst sometimes erred from  
not knowing

If 'twere I or mere wind through her tripod  
was blowing,

Let his mind once get head in its favorite  
direction

And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of  
reflection,

While, borne with the rush of the meter  
along,

The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,  
Content with the whirl and delirium of  
song; 170

Then his grammar's not always correct, nor  
his rhymes,

And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics some-  
times,

<sup>1</sup> the oracular priestess at Delphi

Not his best, though, for those are struck off  
at white-heats

When the heart in his breast like a trip-ham-  
mer beats,

And can ne'er be repeated again any more  
Than they could have been carefully plotted  
before.

Like old what's-his-name<sup>1</sup> there at the battle  
of Hastings

(Who, however, gave more than mere  
rhythmical bastings),

Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights  
For reform and whatever they call human  
rights, 180

Both singing and striking in front of the war  
And tutting his foes with the mallet of Thor,

*Anne haer*, one exclaims, on beholding his  
knocks,

*Vestis filu tu*,<sup>2</sup> O, leather-clad Fox<sup>3</sup>  
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,

Preaching brotherly love and then driving it  
in

To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,  
With the smoothest of pebbles from Cas-

taly's spring,<sup>3</sup>  
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a  
sling?

'All honor and praise to the right-hearted  
bard 190

Who was true to The Voice when such  
service was hard,

Who himself was so free he dared sing for  
the slave

When to look but a protest in silence was  
brave,

All honor and praise to the women and men  
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-

trodden then!

I need not to name them, already for each  
I see History preparing the statue and niche,

They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked  
at hard words

Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up  
into swords,

Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to  
gain 200

<sup>1</sup> The Norman minstrel, Taillefer, who was reputed  
to have struck the first blow in the battle <sup>2</sup> Latin  
version of Genesis 37 32 <sup>3</sup> fountain of poetic inspi-

ration on Parnassus

By the reaping of men and of women than  
grain?

Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce  
wordy war, if

You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff?<sup>1</sup>

Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all  
day long

Doesn't prove that the use of hard language  
is wrong,

While the World's heart beats quicker to  
think of such men

As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody  
steel-pen,

While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators  
fright one

With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,  
You need not look shy at your sisters and  
brothers 210

Who stab with sharp words for the freedom  
of others,—

No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the loyal and  
true

Who, for sake of the many, dared stand with  
the few,

Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies  
braved,

But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens  
saved!

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so  
shrinking and rare

That you hardly at first see the strength that  
is there,

A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,  
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,  
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet; 220

'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,  
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of  
the wood,

Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and  
scathe,

With a single anemone trembly and rather,  
His strength is so tender, his wildness so  
meek,

That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—  
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan  
Tieck,

<sup>1</sup> Questions of the constitutionality of a national bank and of the tariff were much under discussion at the time this poem was written

When Nature was shaping him, clay was not  
granted

For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,  
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared 230

From some finer-grained stuff for a woman  
prepared,

And she could not have hut a more excellent  
plan

For making him fully and perfectly man.  
The success of her scheme gave her so much  
delight,

That she tried it again, shortly after, in  
Dwight,

Only, while she was kneading and shaping  
the clay,

She sang to her work in her sweet childish  
way,

And found, when she'd put the last touch to  
his soul,

That the music had somehow got mixed with  
the whole

"Here's Cooper, who's written six vol-  
umes to show 240

He's as good as a lord well, let's grant that  
he's so,

If a person prefer that description of praise,  
Why, a coroner's certainly cheaper than  
bays,

But he need take no pains to convince us he's  
not

(As his enemies say) the American Scott  
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud

That one of his novels of which he's most  
proud,

And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quit-  
ting

Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquit-  
ting

He has drawn you one character, though, that  
is new, 250

One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with  
the dew

Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing  
not to mince,

He has done naught but copy it ill ever since,  
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,

Are just Natty Bumppo daubed over with  
red,

And his very Long Toms are the same useful  
Nat,

Rugged up in duck pants and a sou'-wester  
hat,

(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was  
found

To have slipt the old fellow away under-  
ground).

All his other men-figures are clothes upon  
sticks, 260

The *dernière chemise*<sup>1</sup> of a man in a fix,  
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's  
small,

Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the  
wall),

And the women he draws from one model  
don't vary,

All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie  
When a character's wanted, he goes to the  
task

As a cooper would do in composing a cask,  
He picks out the staves, of their qualities  
heedful,

Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,  
And, if the best fortune should crown the  
attempt, he 270

Has made at the most something wooden and  
empty

"Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's  
abilities,

If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very  
ill at ease,

The men who have given to *one* character life  
And objective existence, are not very rife,  
You may number them all, both prose-  
writers and singers,

Without overrunning the bounds of your  
fingers,

And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker  
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the  
vicar.<sup>2</sup>

"There is one thing in Cooper I like, too,  
and that is 280

That on manners he lectures his countrymen  
gratis,

Not precisely so either, because, for a rarity,  
He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity.  
Now he may overcharge his American pic-  
tures,

<sup>1</sup> "last shirt"    <sup>2</sup> Parson Adams is a character in  
Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Dr Primrose is the vicar  
in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth in  
his strictures;

And I honor the man who is willing to sink  
Half his present repute for the freedom to  
think,

And, when he has thought, be his cause strong  
or weak,

Will risk t'other half for the freedom to speak,  
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob  
has in store, 290

Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or  
lower

"There are truths you Americans need to be  
told,

And it never'll refute them to swagger and  
scold,

John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in choler  
At your aptness for trade, says you worship  
the dollar,

But to scorn such eye-dollar-try's what very  
few do,

And John goes to that church as often as you  
do.

No matter what John says, don't try to out-  
crow him,

'Tis enough to go quietly on and outgrow  
him,

Like most fathers, Bull hates to see Number  
One 300

Displacing himself in the mind of his son,  
And detests the same faults in himself he'd  
neglected

When he sees them again in his child's glass  
reflected,

To love one another you're too like by half  
If he is a bull, you're a pretty stout calf,  
And tear your own pasture for naught but to  
show

What a nice pair of horns you're beginning to  
grow.

"There are one or two things I should just  
like to hunt,

For you don't often get the truth told you in  
print,

The most of you (this is what strikes all  
beholders) 310

Have a mental and physical stoop in the  
shoulders;

Though you ought to be free as the winds and  
the waves,

You've the gait and the manners of run-  
away slaves;

Tho' you brag of your New World, you don't  
half believe in it,

And as much of the Old as is possible weave  
in it,

Your goddess of freedom, a tight, buxom girl,  
With lips like a cherry and teeth like a pearl,  
With eyes bold as Herè's,<sup>1</sup> and hair floating  
free,

And full of the sun as the spray of the sea,  
Who can sing at a husking or romp at a  
shearing, 320

Who can trip through the forests alone with-  
out fearing,

Who can drive home the cows with a song  
through the grass,

Keeps glancing aside into Europe's cracked  
glass,

Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches up her  
lithe waist,

And makes herself wretched with transmarine  
taste,

She loses her fresh country charm when she  
takes

Any mirror except her own rivers and lakes

"You steal Englishmen's books<sup>2</sup> and think  
Englishmen's thought,

With their salt on her tail your wild eagle is  
caught;

Your literature suits its each whisper and  
motion 330

To what will be thought of it over the ocean,  
The cast clothes of Europe your statesman-  
ship tries

And mumbles again the old blarneys and  
lies;—

Forget Europe wholly, your veins throb with  
blood,

To which the dull current in hers is but mud,  
Let her sneer, let her say your experiment  
fails,

In her voice there's a tremble e'en now while  
she rails,

And your shore will soon be in the nature of  
things

Covered thick with gilt driftwood of cast-  
away kings,

Where alone, as it were in a Longfellow's  
Waif<sup>1</sup> 340

Her fugitive pieces will find themselves safe.

O, my friends, thank your God, if you have

one, that he

"Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of  
a sea,

Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as  
your pines,

By the scale of a hemisphere shape your  
designs,

Be true to yourselves and this new nineteenth  
age,

As a statue by Powers, or a picture by Page,  
Plow, sail, forge, build, carve, paint, make all  
over new,

To your own New-World instincts contrive  
to be true,

Keep your ears open wide to the Future's first  
call, 350

Be whatever you will, but yourselves first of  
all,

Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's heaven-  
scaling peaks,

And become my new race of more practical  
Greeks —

Hem! your likeness at present I shudder to  
tell o't,

Is that you have your slaves, and the Greek  
had his helot."<sup>2</sup>

. . . . .

"There comes Poe, with his raven, like  
Barnaby Rudge,<sup>3</sup>

Three-fifths of him genius and two-fifths  
sheer fudge,

Who talks like a book of iambs and pen-  
tameters,

In a way to make people of common-sense  
damn meters,

Who has written some things quite the best  
of their kind, 360

But the heart somehow seems all squeezed  
out by the mind,

Who—but hey-day! What's this? Messieurs  
Mathews and Poe,

You mustn't fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,

<sup>1</sup> *The Waif* (1845), a collection of fugitive verse,  
edited by Longfellow    <sup>2</sup> a serf, or bondsman, of an-  
cient Sparta    <sup>3</sup> a half-witted youth, always accom-  
panied by his pet raven, who appears in Dickens's  
novel of the same name

<sup>1</sup> Juno, wife of Jupiter    <sup>2</sup> There was no interna-  
tional copyright law until much later

Does it make a man worse that his character's  
such

As to make his friends love him (as you think)  
too much?

Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive  
More willing than he that his fellows should  
thrive,

While you are abusing him thus, even now  
He would help either one of you out of a  
slough;

You may say that he's smooth and all that till  
you're hoarse, 370

But remember that elegance also is force;  
After polishing granite as much as you will,  
The heart keeps its tough old persistency still,  
Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at  
bay;

Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and  
Gray.

I'm not overfond of Greek meters in English,  
To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too jinglish,  
And your modern hexameter verses are no  
more

Like Greek ones than sleek Mr Pope is like  
Homer;

As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon  
is, 380

So, compared to your moderns, sounds old  
Melesigenes,<sup>1</sup>

I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o't is  
That I've heard the old blind man recite his  
own rhapsodies,

And my ear with that music impregnate may  
be,

Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the  
sea,

Or as one can't bear Strauss when his nature is  
cloven

To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of  
Beethoven,

But, set that aside, and 'tis truth that I speak,  
Had Theocritus written in English, not Greek,  
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce  
change a line 390

In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral  
Evangeline.

That's not ancient nor modern, its place is  
apart

<sup>1</sup> "Meles-born," an epithet applied to Homer who, according to one story, was born near the Meles River in Asia Minor

Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure  
Art,

'Tis a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub  
and strife

As quiet and chaste as the author's own life

"What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart  
and fine brain,

You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,  
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were  
there

Since Cervantes met death in his gentle  
despair,

Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so  
beseeching,— 400

I shan't run directly against my own preaching,  
And, having just laughed at their Raphaels and  
Dantes,

Go to setting you up beside matchless Cer-  
vantes,

But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—  
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick  
Steele,

Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,  
With the whole of that partnership's stock and  
good-will,

Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a  
spell,

The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it  
well,

Sweeten just to your own private liking, then  
strain, 410

That only the finest and clearest remain,  
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives  
From the warm lazy sun loitering down  
through green leaves,

And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly  
deserving

A name either English or Yankee,—just  
Irving

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among  
you for wit,

A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which  
fit

The electrical tangles of wit after wit,  
In long poems 'tis painful sometimes and  
invites

A thought of the way the new Telegraph  
writes, 420

Which pricks down its little sharp sentences  
 spitefully  
 As if you got more than you'd title to right-  
 fully,  
 And you find yourself hoping its wild father  
 Lightning  
 Would flame in for a second and give you a  
 fright'ning  
 He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham  
 meter,  
 But many admire it, the English pentameter,  
 And Campbell, I think, wrote most com-  
 monly worse,  
 With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same  
 kind of verse,  
 Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of  
 praise  
 As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Mar-*  
*seillaise*<sup>1</sup> 430  
 You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New  
 Timon<sup>2</sup>,—  
 Why, if B to the day of his dying, should  
 rime on,  
 Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon  
 tomes,  
 He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor  
 of Holmes  
 His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a  
 lyric  
 Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with  
 satiric  
 In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes  
 That are trodden upon are your own or your  
 foes'

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus  
 to climb  
 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with  
 rhyme, 440  
 He might get on alone, spite of brambles and  
 boulders,  
 But he can't with that bundle he has on his  
 shoulders,  
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh  
 reaching  
 Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and  
 preaching,

<sup>1</sup> in "Poetry A Metrical Essay," read before the  
 Harvard chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, 1836 <sup>2</sup> a poem  
 in which Bulwer satirized the work of other poets,  
 including Tennyson (see Tennyson's "Literary  
 Squabbles" for his reply)

His lyre has some chords that would ring  
 pretty well,  
 But he'd rather by half make a drum of the  
 shell,  
 And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,  
 At the head of a march to the last new Jerusa-  
 lem"

1848

### From BEAVER BROOK

Printed in the *Standard*, January 4, 1849  
 Beaver Brook was within walking distance of Elm-  
 wood Lowell wrote in 1849, "The little mill  
 stands in a valley between one of the spurs of  
 Wellington Hill and the main summit, just on  
 the edge of Waltham. It is surely one of the love-  
 liest spots in the world. It is one of my lions, and  
 if you will make me a visit this spring I will take  
 you up to hear it roar, and I will show you 'the  
 oaks'—the largest, I fancy, left in the country'  
 (*Letters*, I, 149)

HUSHED with broad sunlight lies the hull,  
 And, minuting<sup>1</sup> the long day's loss,  
 The cedar's shadow, slow and still,  
 Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup,  
 The aspen's leaves are scarce astir,  
 Only the little mill sends up  
 Its busy, never-ceasing burr

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems  
 The road along the millpond's brink, 10  
 From 'neath the arching barberry-stems,  
 My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood  
 The mill's red door lets forth the din,  
 The whitened miller, dust-imbued,  
 Flits past the square of dark within

No mountain torrent's strength is here;  
 Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,  
 Heaps its small putcher to the ear,  
 And gently waits the miller's will. 20

Swift slips Undine<sup>2</sup> along the race  
 Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,  
 Floods the dull wheel with light and grace,  
 And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge round.

<sup>1</sup> recording by minutes <sup>2</sup> the water sprite in  
 Fouqué's *Undine* (1811)

The miller dreams not at what cost  
The quivering millstones hum and whirl,  
Nor how for every turn, are tost  
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl . .

1849

## SHE CAME AND WENT

Lowell's little daughter Blanche died in 1847  
His "The Changeling" and "The First Snow-Fall"  
are other poems concerning her

As a twig trembles, which a bird  
Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent,  
So is my memory thrilled and sturred,—  
I only know she came and went

As clasps some lake, by gusts untriven,  
The blue dome's measureless content,  
So my soul held that moment's heaven,—  
I only know she came and went

As, at one bound, our swift spring heaps  
The orchards full of bloom and scent, 10  
So clove her May my wintry sleeps;—  
I only know she came and went

An angel stood and met my gaze,  
Through the low doorway of my tent;  
The tent is struck, the vision stays,—  
I only know she came and went.

Oh, when the room grows slowly dum,  
And life's last oil is nearly spent,  
One gush of light these eyes will brim,  
Only to think she came and went. 20

1849

AUF WIEDERSEHEN<sup>1</sup>

Published in *Putnam's Magazine*, December, 1854. Composed after the death of Mrs Lowell (Maria White), October 27, 1853. See Longfellow's poem, "The Two Angels", also Scudder's *Life*, I, 356-63, and *The Poems of Maria White Lowell* (1855)

## SUMMER

THE little gate was reached at last,  
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;  
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,  
A wistful look she backward cast,  
And said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

<sup>1</sup> "Till we meet again."

With hand on latch, a vision white  
Lingered reluctant, and again  
Half doubting if she did aright,  
Soft as the dew that fell that night,  
She said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"* 10

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;  
I linger in delicious pain;  
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air  
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,  
Thinks she,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

'Tis thirteen years, once more I press  
The turf that silences the lane,  
I hear the rustle of her dress,  
I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,  
I hear,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"* 20

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!  
The English words had seemed too fair,  
But these—they drew us heart to heart,  
Yet held us tenderly apart,  
She said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"* 1854

## AFTER THE BURIAL

Printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1868  
Lowell suffered many bereavements in this period  
of his life. Six stanzas of the poem were written  
in 1850, the year of the death of his second little  
daughter, Rose. The poem was completed in 1868,  
when his mother and his only son, as well as his  
daughters and his wife, were dead, and his father  
invalided

Yes, faith is a goodly anchor,  
When skies are sweet as a psalm,  
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,  
In bluff, broad-shouldered calm

And when over breakers to leeward  
The tattered surges are hurled,  
It may keep our head to the tempest,  
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me  
What help in its iron thews, 10  
Still true to the broken hawser,  
Deep down among seaweed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,  
When the helpless feet stretch out  
And find in the deeps of darkness  
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of Memory,  
One broken plank of the Past,  
That our human heart may cling to,  
Though hopeless of shore at last! 20

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,  
To the flesh its sweet despair,  
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket  
With its anguish of deathless har!l

Immortal? I feel it and know it,  
Who doubts it of such as she?  
But that is the pang's very secret,—  
Immortal away from me

There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard  
Would scarce stay a child in its race, 30  
But to me and my thought it is wider  
Than the star-sown vague of Space

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,  
Your morals most dearly true,

But, since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,  
I keep hearing that, and not you

Console if you will, I can bear it;  
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath,  
But not all the preaching since Adam  
Has made Death other than Death. 40

It is pagan, but wait till you feel it,—  
That jar of our earth, that dull shock  
When the ploughshare of deeper passion  
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,  
But I, who am earthy and weak,  
Would give all my incomes from dreamland  
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,  
So worn and wrinkled and brown, 50  
With its emptiness confutes you,  
And argues your wisdom down.

1868

### From THE BIGLOW PAPERS, FIRST SERIES

In these papers Lowell broke away from European models and from romance. The first number was printed in the *Boston Courier*, June 17, 1846. Its success led Lowell to write eight more numbers. These he published in book form in 1848. To the character Ezekiel Biglow, who introduces his son Hosea as a poet, Lowell added the Rev Homer Wilbur, the learned minister of the town of Jaalam, who appended introductions, comments, and prose annotations. Lowell also prefixed to the book imaginary eulogistic comments, "Notices of an Independent Press." Among them he inserted stanzas of another poem by Hosea, later expanded into "The Courtin'" of the second series. A glossary of New England dialect words was added also. The poem had astonishing success and influenced political opinion. "When I wrote the first of the series," Lowell said in the introduction to the second series, "I had no definite plan and no intention of ever writing another. Thinking the Mexican War, as I think it still, a national crime committed in behoof of slavery, our common sin, and wishing to put the feeling of those who thought as I did in a way that would tell, I imagined to myself such an up-country man as I had often seen at antislavery gatherings, capable of district school English, but

always instinctively falling back into the natural stronghold of his homely dialect when heated to the point of self-forgetfulness. I needed on occasion to rise above the level of mere *patos*, and for this purpose conceived the Rev Mr Wilbur."

No. I

#### A Letter

FROM MR EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM TO THE  
HON JOSEPH T BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF  
THE BOSTON COURIER, ENCLOSING A POEM  
OF HIS SON, MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

JAYLEM, june 1846

MISTER EDDYTER.—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and ffin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his 1 teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosy woodn't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousers, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on



wal, Hosea he com home considerabal riled,  
and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a  
thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in flit-  
time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she,  
Zekle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or  
suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered,  
ses I, he's oney amakin pottery [*Aut unsanit, aut  
versos facit.*<sup>1</sup>—H. W.] ses I, he's ollers on hand  
at that ere busynes like Da & martin,<sup>2</sup> and shure  
enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares  
full chuzzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin,  
and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson  
Wilbur bein he haint aneygrate shows o' book  
larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed  
the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as  
I hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True  
grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn  
now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum  
o' the last varses, but he told Hosee he didn't  
want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on  
'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz,  
and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about  
Simplex Mundishes<sup>3</sup> or sum sech feller, but I  
guess Hosea kind o' didn't hear him, for I  
never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this  
villadge, and I've lived here man and boy 76  
year cum next tater diggin; and thair aint no  
wheres a kitting spryer'n I be

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks  
know who hosy's father is, cos my ant Keziah  
used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she  
aint livin though and he's a likely kind o' lad

EZEKIEL BIGLOW.

Thrash away, you'll hev to rattle  
On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—  
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle  
That is ketched with moldy corn,  
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,  
Let folks see how spy you be,—  
Guess you'll toot till you are yellor  
'Fore you git ahold o' mel

<sup>1</sup> "Either he goes mad or he composes verses."  
"H. W." is Homer Wilbur, the parson who edits  
Ezekiel's writing, and who is quoting here from the  
second satire of Horace. <sup>2</sup> Day and Martin used  
rhymes in advertising their shoeblacking. <sup>3</sup> Parson  
Wilbur's expression was another quotation from  
Horace—*simplex munditiis*—which means "plain in  
[thy] neatness."

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,  
Hope it aint your Sunday's best;— 10  
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton  
To stuff out a soger's chest  
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,  
Ef you must wear humps like these,  
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer't,  
It would du' ez slick ez grease.

'Twouldn't suit them Southun fellers,  
They're a dreffle graspin' set,  
We must ollers blow the bellers  
Wen they want their irons het, 20  
May be it's all right ez preachin',  
But my narves it kind o' grates,  
Wen I see the overreachin'  
O' them nigger-drivin' States

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,  
Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth,  
(Helped by Yankee renegaders,) Thru the vartu o' the Northl  
We begin to think it's nater  
To take sarse an' not be riled,— 30  
Who'd expect to see a tater  
All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—  
There you hev it plain an' flat,  
I don't want to go no furdur  
Than my Testymet fer that;  
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,  
It's ez long ez it is broad,  
An' you've gut to git up airly  
Ef you want to take in God 40

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers  
Make the thung a grain more right;  
'Taint afoleern' your bell-wethers  
Will excuse ye in His sight,  
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,  
An' go stuck a feller thru,  
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,  
God'll send the bill to you

Wut's the use o' meetin'-goin'  
Every Sabbath, wet or dry, 50  
Ef it's right to go amowin'  
Feller-men like oats an' rye?  
I dunno but wut it's pooty  
Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—  
But it's curus Christian dooty  
This 'ere cuttin' folks's throws.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy<sup>1</sup>  
 Tell they're pupple in the face,—  
 It's a grand gret cemetary  
 Fer the barthingts of our race, 60  
 They jest want this Californy  
 So's to lug new slave-states in  
 To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,  
 An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee  
 Take sech everlastin' pains,  
 All to git the Devil's thankee,  
 Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?  
 Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,  
 Clear ez one an' one make two, 70  
 Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers  
 Want to make wite slaves o' you

Tell ye jest the eend I've come to  
 Arter ciphern' plaguy smart,  
 An' it makes a handy sum, tu,  
 Any gump could larn by heart,  
 Laborin' man an' laborin' woman  
 Hev one glory an' one shame,  
 Ev'y thin' thet's done inhuman  
 Injers all on 'em the same 80

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks  
 You're agoin' to git your right,  
 Nor by lookin' down on black folks  
 Coz you're put upon by wite,  
 Slavery aint o' nary color,  
 'Taint the hude thet makes it wus,  
 All it keers fer in a feller  
 'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?  
 I expect you'll hev to wait; 90  
 Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye  
 You'll begin to kal'l late;  
 'Spose the crows wun't fall to pickin'  
 All the carkiss from your bones,  
 Coz you helped to give a hickin'  
 To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy  
 Wether I'd be sech a goose  
 Ez to june ye,—guess you'd fancy  
 The etarnal bung was loose! 100

She wants me fer home consumption,  
 Let alone the hay's to mow,—  
 Ef you're arter folks o' gumption,  
 You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet's crowin'  
 Like a cockerel three months old,—  
 Don't ketch any on 'em goin',  
 Though they *be* so blasted bold;  
 Aint they a prime lot o' fellers? 109  
 'Fore they think on't guess they'll  
 sprout,  
 (Like a peach thet's got the yellors)  
 With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'  
 Bigger pens to cram with slaves,  
 Help the men thet's ollers dealin'  
 Insults on your fathers' graves,  
 Help the strong to grind the feeble,  
 Help the many agin the few,  
 Help the men thet call your people 119  
 Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,  
 She's akneeling with the rest,  
 She thet ough' to ha' clung ferever  
 In her grand old eagle-nest,  
 She thet ough' to stand so fearless  
 Wile the wracks are round her hurled,  
 Holdin' up a beacon peerless  
 To the oppressed of all the world!

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?  
 Ha'n't they made your env'ys w'izz? 130  
 Wut'll make ye act like free men?  
 Wut'll git your dander riz?  
 Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'  
 Is our dooty in this fix,  
 They'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'  
 In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,  
 Call all true men to disown  
 The tradooers of our people,  
 The enslavers o' their own, 140  
 Let our dear old Bay State proudly  
 Put the trumpet to her mouth,  
 Let her ring this messidge loudly  
 In the ears of all the South.—

<sup>1</sup> area.

"I'll return ye good for evil  
 Much ez we frail mortals can,  
 But I won't go help the Devil  
 Makin' man the cus o' man;  
 Call me coward, call me traider,  
 Jest ez suits your mean ideas,— 150  
 Here I stand a tyrant-hater,  
 An' the friend o' God an' Peace!"

Ef I'd my way I hed ruther  
 We should go to work an' part,—  
 They take one way, we take t'other,—  
 Guess it wouldn't break my heart;  
 Man hed ough' to put asunder  
 Them thet God has noways joined;  
 An' I shouldn't gretly wonder  
 Ef there's thousands o' my mind 160

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it* Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time*. Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be *κατ' ἐξοχήν* that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Konigsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation had been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that "God would consider a gentleman and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus*.—H. W.]

## No. III

*What Mr. Robinson Thinks*

The prose introduction and close for this poem, by the Rev Homer Wilbur, are omitted. John P. Robinson of the Whig party stated in 1847 that he expected to support Caleb Cushing, a brigadier general in the Mexican War, Democratic candidate for governor of Massachusetts. Governor George Nixon Briggs, running for re-election, won over Cushing.

Guvener B is a sensible man,  
 He stays to his home an' looks arter his  
 folks;  
 He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,  
 An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes,  
 But John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My' aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?  
 We can't never choose him o' course,—  
 ther's flat,  
 Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't  
 you?) 10  
 An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all  
 that,  
 Fer John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gmeneral C is a drefle smart man,  
 He's ben on all sides thet give places or  
 pelf,  
 But consistency still wuz a part of his plan,—  
 He's ben true to one party,—an' thet is  
 himself,—  
 So John P.  
 Robinson he 20  
 Sez he shall vote fer Gmeneral C

Gmeneral C. he goes in fer the war;  
 He don't vally princerple more'n an old  
 cud,  
 Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,  
 But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an'  
 blood?  
 So John P.  
 Robinson he  
 Sez he shall vote fer Gmeneral C.

We were gitten' on nicely up here to our vil-  
lage,

With good old idee's o' wut's right an' wut  
an't, 30

We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an'  
pillage,

An' thet eppylets worn't the best mark  
of a saint,

But John P.

Robinson he

Sez this kind o' thung's an exploded idee

The side of our country must ollers be took,  
An' Presidnt Polk, you know, *he* is our  
country

An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book  
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per*  
*contry*,<sup>1</sup>

An' John P. 40

Robinson he

Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argumunts  
lies,

Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw,*  
*fum,*

An' thet all this big talk of our desunies

Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum,

But John P.

Robinson he

Sez it aint no sech thung, an', of course,  
so must we

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life  
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-  
tail coats, 51

An' marched round in front of a drum an' a  
fife,

To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em  
votes;

But John P.

Robinson he

Sez they didn't know everythin' down in  
Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us

The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters,  
I vow,—

God sends country lawyers, an' other wise  
fellers,

To start the world's team wen it gits in a  
slough; 60

Fer John P.

Robinson he

Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers  
out Gee!

1847

### From THE BIGLOW PAPERS, SECOND SERIES

The first poem of the second series of *The Biglow Papers* was written early in December, 1861, and appeared in January, 1862, fourteen years after the launching of the first series. This second series of eleven numbers dealt with problems and events connected with the Civil War.

#### *The Courtin'*

In its first and briefer form this poem appeared in the "Notices of an Independent Press" in the first series of *The Biglow Papers*. In a later edition Lowell added more stanzas. The final text of the poem was first published at the end of the introduction to the second series. Lowell explained in his introduction how the poem happened to appear there.

The only attempt I had ever made at anything like a pastoral (if that may be called an attempt which was the result almost of pure accident) was in "The Courtin'." While the introduction to the First Series was going through the press, I received word from the printer that there was a blank page left which must be filled. I sat down at once and improvised another fictitious "notice of the press," in which, because verse would fill up space more cheaply than prose, I inserted an extract from a supposed ballad of Mr. Biglow. I kept no copy of it, and the printer, as directed, cut it off when the gap was filled. Presently I began to receive letters asking for the rest of it, sometimes for the *balance* of it. I had none, but to answer such demands, I patched a conclusion upon it in a later edition. Those who had only the first continued to importune me. Afterward, being asked to write it out as an autograph for the Baltimore Sanitary Commission Fair, I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it, but I shall put it at the end of this introduction, to answer once for all those kindly importunings.

GOD makes sech nights, all whute an' snll  
Fur 'z you can look or listen,  
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hull,  
All silence an' all glisten.

<sup>1</sup> *Per contra* ("on the other hand") means *credit*, as opposed to *debit* in the first part of the line.

Zekle crip' up quite unbeknown  
 An' peeked in thru' the winder,  
 An' there sot Huld' all alone,  
 'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side  
 With half a cord o' wood in— 10  
 There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)  
 To bake ye to a puddin'

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out  
 Towards the pootiest, bless her,  
 An' leetle flames danced all about  
 The chuny on the dresser

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,  
 An' in amongst 'em rusted  
 The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young  
 Fetched back from Concord busted 20

The very room, coz she was in,  
 Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',  
 An' she looked full ez rosy agin  
 Ez the apples she was peelin'

'Twas kun' o' kingdom-come to look  
 On sech a blessed cretur,  
 A dogrose blushin' to a brook  
 Ain't modester nor sweeter

He was six foot o' man, A I,  
 Clear grit an' human natur', 30  
 None couldn't quicker pitch a ton  
 Nor dror a furrer straighter

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,  
 Hed squared 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,  
 Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—  
 All is, he couldn't love 'em

But long o' her his veins 'ould run  
 All crinkly like curled maple,  
 The side she breshed felt full o' sun  
 Ez a south slope in Ap'il 40

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing  
 Ez husn in the choir;  
 My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,  
 She *knowed* the Lord was nigher

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,  
 When her new meetin'-bunnet  
 Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair  
 O' blue eyes sot upun it

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*  
 She seemed to've gut a new soul, 50  
 For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,  
 Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,  
 A-raspin' on the scraper,—  
 All ways to once her feelin's flew  
 Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat  
 Some doubtfe o' the sekle,  
 His heart kep' gom' pity-pat,  
 But hern went pity Zekle. 60

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk  
 Ez though she wished him fuder,  
 An' on her apples kep' to work,  
 Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"  
 "Wal . . . no I come dasignun'"—  
 "To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es  
 Agin to-morrer's t'nin'"

To say why gals acts so or so,  
 Or don't, 'ould be presum'n', 70  
 Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*  
 Comes nat'ral to women

He stood a spell on one foot fust,  
 Then stood a spell on t'other,  
 An' on which one he felt the wust  
 He couldn't ha' told ye nuther

Says he, "I'd better call agin",  
 Says she, "Think likely, Mister"  
 Thet last word pricked him like a pin,  
 An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her. 80

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,  
 Huld' sot pale ez ashes,  
 All kun' o' smily roun' the lips  
 An' teary roun' the lashes

For she was jes' the quiet kind  
 Whose naturs never vary,  
 Like streams that keep a summer mind  
 Snowh'd in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued  
 Too tight for all expressin', 90  
 Tell mother-see how matters stood,  
 An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide  
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,  
An' all I know is they was cried<sup>1</sup>  
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

1861

From No II

*Jonathan to John*

The second number of the second series of *The Biglow Papers*, bearing the title "Mason and Slidell a Yankee Idyll," had prefixed to it a letter to the editors of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The letter discusses the nature of the "Idyll" and mentions the case of the Confederate agents Mason and Slidell. These men, sent by the South to represent its cause in England and France, were removed from an English vessel by a Unionist captain. The British government proclaimed the act an "outrage," asked for the release of the prisoners and reparation, and prepared for hostilities. Lowell resented England's tendency to take the side of the South in the Civil War. "Jonathan to John" followed a dialogue between Concord Bridge, representing a protest at England's attitude, and the Bunker Hill monument, representing those favoring tolerance of it.

It don't seem hardly right, John,  
When both my hands was full,  
To stump me to a fight, John,—  
Your cousin, tu, John Bull!  
Ole Uncle S sez he, "I guess  
We know it now," sez he,  
"The lion's paw is all the law,  
Accordin' to J B,  
Thet's fit for you an' mel"

You wonder why we're hot, John? 10  
Your mark wuz on the guns,  
The neutral guns, thet shot, John,  
Our brothers an' our sons  
Old Uncle S sez he, "I guess  
There's human blood," sez he,  
"By fits an' starts, in Yankee hearts,  
Though 't may surprise J B  
More'n it would you an' me"

Ef I turned mad dogs loose, John,  
On your front-parlor stairs, 20  
Would it jest meet your views, John,  
To wait an' sue their heirs?  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
I on'y guess," sez he,

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the marriage banns were announced

"Thet ef Vattel on *his* toes fell,  
'Twould kind o' rile J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' mel"

Who made the law thet hurts, John,  
Heads I win,—ditto tails?  
"J B." was on his shirts, John, 30  
Onless my memory fails  
Ole Uncle S sez he, "I guess  
(I'm good at thet)," sez he,  
"Thet sauce for goose ain't *jest* the juice  
For ganders with J. B.,  
No more'n with you or mel"

When your rights was our wrongs, John,  
You didn't stop for fuss,—  
Britanny's trident prongs, John, 40  
Was good 'nough law for us  
Ole Uncle S sez he, "I guess,  
Though physic's good," sez he,  
"It doesn't foller thet he can swaller  
Prescriptions signed 'J B.,'  
Put up by you and mel"

We own the ocean, tu, John  
You mus'n' take it hard,  
Ef we can't thunk with you, John.  
It's jest your own back-yard  
Ole Uncle S sez he, "I guess, 50  
Ef *ther's* his claim," sez he,  
"The fencin'-stuff'll cost enough  
To bust up friend J B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' mel"

Why talk so drefle big, John,  
Of honor when it meant  
You didn't care a fig, John,  
But jest for *ten per cent*?  
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess 60  
He's like the rest," sez he.  
"When all is done, it's number one  
Thet's nearest to J. B.,  
Ez wal ez t' you an' mel"

We give the critters back, John,  
Cos Abram though 'twas right;  
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,  
Provokin' us to fight.  
Ole Uncle S sez he, "I guess  
We've a hard row," sez he,  
"To hoe jest now; but thet somehow, 70  
May happen to J. B.,  
Ez wal ez you an' mel"

We ain't so weak an' poor, John,  
 With twenty milhon people,  
 An' close to every door, John,  
 A school-house an' a steeple.  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
 It is a fact," sez he,  
 "The surest plan to make a Man  
 Is, think him so, J B,  
 Ez much ez you or mel" 80

Our folks believe in Law, John,  
 An' it's for her sake, now,  
 They've left the axe an' saw, John,  
 The anvil an' the plough  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
 Ef 't warn't for law," sez he,  
 "There'd be one shindy<sup>1</sup> from here to Indy,  
 An' thet don't sut J B  
 (When 't ain't 'twixt you an' mel)" 90

We know we've got a cause, John,  
 Thet's honest, just, an' true,  
 We thought 'twould win applause, John,  
 Ef nowheres else, from you  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
 His love of right," sez he,  
 "Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton  
 There's natur' in J. B.,  
 Ez wal ez you an' mel"

The South says, "Poor folks down" John, 100  
 An' "All men up" say we,—  
 White, yaller, black, an' brown, John.  
 Now which is your idee?  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
 John preaches wal," sez he,  
 "But, sermon thru, an' come to du,  
 Why, there's the old J B  
 A crowdin' you an' mel"

Shall it be love, or hate, John?  
 It's you thet's to decide, 110  
 Ain't *your* bonds held by Fate, John,  
 Like all the world's beside?  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess  
 Wise men forgive," sez he,  
 "But not forget, an' some time yet  
 Thet truth may strike J. B.,  
 Ez wal ez you an' mel"

<sup>1</sup> uproar, brawl

God means to make this land, John,  
 Clear thru, from sea to sea,  
 Believe an' understand, John, 120  
 The wuth o' bein' free.  
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,  
 God's price is high," sez he;  
 "But nothin' else than wut He sells  
 Wears long, an' thet J. B.  
 May larn, like you an' mel"

1861

1862

## No. VI

*Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line*

This was a very popular number in the second series of *The Biglow Papers*. It is a description of spring in Yankee dialect, and an expression of Lowell's marked delight in nature. For Lowell's treatment of nature, consult Foerster's *Nature in American Literature*.

Once git a smell o' musk into a draw,  
 An' it clings hold like precedents in law  
 Your gra'ma'am put it there,—when, good-  
 ness knows—  
 To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es,  
 But the old chust wun't sarve her gran-  
 son's wife  
 (For, 'thout new funnitoo, wut good in life?),  
 An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks dread  
 O' the spare chamber, slinks into the shed,  
 Where, dim with dust, it fust or last subsides  
 To holdin' seeds an' fifty things besides, 10  
 But better days stick fast in heart an' husk,  
 An' all you keep in't gits a scent o' musk

Jes' so with poets wut they've airly read  
 Gits kind o' worked into their heart an' head,  
 So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest on  
 sheers

With furrin countries or played-out ideers,  
 Nor hev a feelin', ef it doosn't smack  
 O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way back  
 Thus makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an'  
 things,  
 Ez though we'd nothin' here that blows an'  
 sings 20

(Why, I'd give more for one live bobolink  
 Than a square mile o' larks in printer's ink),—  
 Thus makes 'em think our fust o' May is May,  
 Which 'taun't, for all the almanucks can say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it  
 Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet!  
 They're apt to puff, an' May-day seldom looks  
 Up in the country ez it doos in books;  
 They're no more like than hornets'-nests an'  
 hives,

Or printed sarmons be to holy lives. 30  
 I, with my trouses perched on cowhide boots,  
 Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the roots,  
 Hev seen ye come to fling on April's hearse  
 Your muslin nose-gays from the milliner's,  
 Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen to  
 choose,  
 An' dance your throats sore in morocker  
 shoes

I've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come wut  
 would,  
 Our Pilgrim stock wuz pethed with hardi-  
 hood.

Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind o'  
 winch,  
 Ez though 'twuz sunthin' paid for by the  
 inch, 40

But yit we du contrive to worry thru,  
 Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing's to du,  
 An' kerry a hollerday, if we set out,  
 Ez stiddily ez though 'twuz a redoubt

I, country-born an' bred, know where to find  
 Some blooms thet make the season suit the  
 mind,

An' seem to metch the doubtin' bluebird's  
 notes,—

Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,  
 Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you  
 oncurl,

Each on 'em's cradle to a baby-pearl,— 50  
 But these are jes' Spring's pickets, sure ez sin,  
 The rebbles frosts 'll try to drive 'em in,  
 For half our May's so awfully like Mayn't,  
 'twould rile a Shaker or an evrige saint;  
 Though I own up I like our back'ard springs  
 Thet kind o' haggles with their greens an'  
 things,

An' when you 'most give up, 'thout more  
 words

Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an'  
 burds.

Thet's Northun natur', slow an' apt to doubt,  
 But when it doos git stirred, ther' 's no gin-  
 out! 60

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall trees,  
 An' settlin' things in windy Congresses,—  
 Queer politicians, though, for I'll be skinned  
 Ef all on 'em don't head against the wind.  
 'fore long the trees begin to show belief,—  
 The maple crimson to a coral-reef,  
 Then saffern swarms swing off from all the  
 wallers

So plump they look like yaller caterpillars,  
 Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands unfold  
 Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old 70  
 Thet's robin-redbreast's almanick, he knows  
 Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-snows,  
 So, choosin' out a handy crotch an' spouse,  
 He goes to plast'rin' his adobe house

Then seems to come a hitch,—things lag be-  
 hind,

Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up her  
 mind,

An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh their  
 dams

Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in an' jams,  
 A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-hole  
 cleft,

Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right an'  
 left, 80

Then all the waters bow themselves an' come,  
 Suddin, in one gret slope o' sheddern' foam,  
 Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune  
 An' gives one leap from Aperl into June.  
 Then all comes crowdin' in, afore you think,  
 Young oak-leaves mist the side-hill woods  
 with pink;

The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud,  
 The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud,  
 Red-cedars blossom tu, though few folks  
 know it,

An' look all dipt in sunshine like a poet, 90  
 The lime-trees pile their solid stacks o' shade  
 An' drows'ly summer with the bees' sweet  
 trade;

In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird clings  
 An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock  
 slings;

All down the loose-walled lanes in archun'  
 bowers

The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden  
 flowers,

Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals love  
 to try



With pins,—they'll worry yourn so, boys,  
bimeby!

But I don't love your cat'logue style,—do  
you?

Ez ef to sell off Natur' by vendoo, 100  
One word with blood in't's twice ez good ez  
two.

'nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the year,  
Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is here,  
Half-hud in tip-top apple-blooms he swings,  
Or climbs aginst the breeze with quiverin'  
wings,

Or, givin' way to't in a mock despair,  
Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru the air

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins  
In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly pains,  
Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to walk  
Off by myself to hev a privit talk 111

With a queer critter thet can't seem to 'gree  
Along o' me like most folks,—Mister Me  
Ther' 's times when I'm unsoshle ez a stone,  
An' sort o' suffercate to be alone,—

I'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are nigh,  
An' can't bear nothun' closer than the sky,  
Now the wind's full ez shifty in the mind  
Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,  
An' sometimes, in the fairest-sou'west weather,  
My innard vane pints east for weeks to-  
gether, 121

My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my sins  
Come druzlin' on my conscience sharp ez  
pins

Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o' sight  
An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight  
With the one cuss I can't lay on the shelf,  
The crook'dest stuck in all the heap,—Myself

'Twuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-time  
Findin' my feelin's wouldn't no ways rhyme  
With nobody's, but off the hendle flew 130  
An' took things from an east-wind pint o'  
view,

I started off to lose me in the hills  
Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's Mills  
Pines, ef you're blue, are the best friends I  
know,

They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feelin's  
so,—

They heah the ground beneath so, tu, I swan,  
You half-forgit you've gut a body on

Ther' 's a small school'us' there where four  
roads meet,

The door-steps hollered out by little feet,  
An' side-posts carved with names whose  
owners grew 140

To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons, tu,  
'tain't used no longer, coz the town hez gut  
A high-school, where they teach the Lord  
knows wut

Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now, I guess  
We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories less,  
For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing ez sin-  
nin'

By overloadin' children's underpinnin'  
Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,  
An' it's a kind o' favorite spot with me

We're curus critters Now ain't jes' the  
minute 150

Thet ever fits us easy while we're in it,  
Long ez 'twuz futur', 'twould be perfect  
bliss,—

Soon ez it's past, thet nme's with ten o' this,  
An' yit there wan't a man thet need be told  
Thet Now's the only bird lays eggs o' gold  
A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan  
An' think 'twuz life's cap-sheaf to be a man,  
Now, gittin' gray, there's nothun' I enjoy  
Like dreamin' back along into a boy  
So the ole school'us' is a place I choose 160

Afore all others, ef I want to muse,  
I set down where I used to set, an' git  
My boyhood back, an' better things with  
it,—

Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it isn't Cherrity,  
It's want o' guile, an' ther's ez gret a retnity,—  
While Fancy's cushin', free to Prince and  
Clown,

Makes the hard bench ez soft ez milkweed-  
down

Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath arter-  
noon

When I sot out to tramp myself in tune,  
I found me in the school'us' on my seat, 170  
Drummin' the march to No-wheres with  
my feet.

Thinkin' o' nothun', I've heerd ole folks say  
Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way  
It's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,  
Or ever hearn, to make your feelin's blue.

I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell-  
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o' Hell,  
Which some folks tell ye now is jest a metter-  
for

(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the better  
for), 179

I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we'd win  
Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin.

I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the wits,  
So much a month, warn't givin' Natur' fits,—  
Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own milk  
fail,

To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,  
An' ef ideas 'thout ripenin' in the pan  
Would send up cream to humor ary man.  
From this to thet I let my worryin' creep,  
Till finally I must ha' fell asleep

Our lives in sleep are some like streams thet  
glide 190

'twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each side,  
Where both shores' shadders kind o' mix an'  
mingle

In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either single,  
An' when you cast off moornin's from To-  
day,

An' down towards To-morrer drift away,  
The imiges thet tingle on the stream  
Make a new upside-down'ard world o' dream  
Sometimes they seem hke sunrise-streaks an'  
warnin's

O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-mornin's,  
An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o' spite,  
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't gone  
right 201

I'm gret on dreams, an' often when I wake,  
I've lived so much it makes my mem'ry ache,  
An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my cheir  
'thout hev'in' 'em, some good, some bad, all  
queer

Now I wuz settin' where I'd ben, it seemed,  
An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally dreamed,  
Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha' slep',  
When I hearn some un stompin' up the  
step,  
An' lookin' round, ef two an' two make  
four, 210

I see a Pilgrim Father in the door  
He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an' spurs  
With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-burs,

An' his gret sword behind him sloped away  
Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut to  
say.—

"Ef your name's Biglow, an' your given-  
name

Hosee," sez he, "it's arter you I came;  
I'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by  
three"—

"My wut" sez I—"Your gret-gret-gret,"  
sez he;

"You wouldn't ha' never ben here but for  
me 220

Two hundred an' three year ago this May  
The ship I come in sailed up Boston Bay,  
I'd been a cunnle in our Civil War,—  
But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one for?  
Coz we du things in England, 'tain't for you  
To git a notion you can du 'em tu.

I'm told you write in public prints' ef true,  
It's nateral you should know a thing or  
two"—

"Thet air's an argymunt I can't endorse,—  
'twould prove, coz you wear spurs, you kep'  
a horse 230

For brains," sez I, "wutever you may think,  
Ain't boun' to cash the drafts o' pen-an'-ink,—  
Though mos' folks write ez ef they hoped  
jes' quickenin'

The churn would argoo skim-milk into  
thickenin',

But skim-milk ain't a thing to change its  
view

O' wut it's meant for more'n a smoky flue  
But du pray tell me, 'fore we funder go,  
How in all Natur' did you come to know  
'bout our affairs," sez I, "in Kingdom-  
Come"—

"Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rappin'  
some, 240

An' danced the tables till their legs wuz  
gone,

In hopes o' larnin' wut wuz goin' on,"  
Sez he, "but mejums lie so like all-spl't  
Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.

But, come now, ef you wun't confess to  
knowin',

You've some conjectures how the thing's  
a-goin'"—

"Gran'ther," sez I, "a vane warn't never  
known

Nor asked to hev a jedgment of its own,

An' yit, ef 'tain't gut rusty in the jints,  
It's safe to trust its say on certin pints.  
It knows the wind's opinions to a T, 251  
An' the wind settles wut the weather'll be."  
"I never thought a scion of our stock  
Could grow the wood to make a weather-  
cock,

When I wuz younger'n you, skurce more'n  
a shaver,  
No airthly wind," sez he, "could make me  
waver!"

(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an' fore-  
head,

Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-hilt for-  
ward.)—

"Jes so it wuz with me," sez I, "I swow,  
When I wuz younger'n wut you see me  
now,— 260

Nothin' from Adam's fall to Huld's bonnet,  
Thet I warn't full-cocked with my judgment  
on it,

But now I'm gittin' on in life, I find  
It's a sight harder to make up my mind,—  
Nor I don't often try tu, when events  
Will du it for me free of all expense  
The moral question's ollus plain enough,—  
It's jes' the human-natur' side thet's tough,  
Wut's best to think mayn't puzzle me nor  
you,—

The pinch comes in decidin' wut to du,  
Ef you read History, all runs smooth ez  
grease, 271

Coz there the men ain't nothin' more'n  
idees,—

But come to make it, ez we must to-day,  
Th' idees hev arms an' legs an' stop the way  
It's easy fixin' things in facts an' figgers,—  
They can't resist, nor warn't brought up with  
niggers;

But come to try your the'ry on,—why, then  
Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant men  
Actin' ez ugly—" —"Smite 'em hip an'  
thigh!" 279

Sez gran'ther, "and let every man-child die!  
Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the Lordl  
Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the  
sword!"—

"Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole Judee,  
But you forgit how long it's ben a D,  
You think thet's ellersence,—I call it shoddy,  
A thung," sez I, "wun't cover soul nor body,

I like the plain all-wool o' commonsense,  
Thet warns ye now, an' will a twelve month  
hence.

You took to follerin' where the Prophets  
beckoned,

An', fust you knowed on, back come Charles  
the Second, 290

Now wut I want's to hev all we gain stick,  
An' not to start Millennium too quick;  
We hain't to punish only, but to keep,  
An' the cure's gut to go a cent'ry deep."

"Wal, milk-an'-water ain't the best o' glue,"  
Sez he, "an' so you'll find before you're  
thru,

Ef reashness venters sunthin', shully-shally  
Loses ez often wut's ten times the vally  
Thet ex of ourn, when Charles's neck gut split,  
Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over yit. 300  
Slav'ry's your Charles, the Lord hez gin the  
ex—"

"Our Charles," sez I, "hez gut eight million  
necks

The hardest question ain't the black man's  
right,

The trouble is to 'mancipate the white,  
One's chained in body an' can be sot free,  
But t'other's chained in soul to an idee  
It's a long job, but we shall worry thru it,  
Ef bagnets fail, the spellin'-book must du it."  
"Hosce," sez he, "I think you're goin' to  
fail 309

The retlesnake ain't dangerous in the tail,  
Thus 'ere rebellion's nothin' but the rattle,—  
You'll stomp on thet an' think you've won  
the bettle,

It's Slavery thet's the fangs an' thinkin' head,  
An' ef you want selvation, cresh it dead,—  
An' cresh it suddin, or you'll larn by waitin'  
Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to de-  
baun'"—

"God's truth!" sez I,— "an' ef I held the club,  
An' knowed jes' where to strike,—but there's  
the rub!"—

"Strike soon," sez he, "or you'll be dedly  
ainn',— 319

Folks thet's afear'd to fail are sure o' failin';  
God hates your sneakin' creturs thet believe  
He'll settle things they run away an' leave!"  
He brought his foot down fiercely, ez he spoke,  
An' gave me sech a startle thet I woke.

## THE WASHERS OF THE SHROUD

Published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1861. These were the days after Fort Sumter had surrendered and the Union troops had met defeat at Bull Run. Lowell was an impassioned nationalist. He felt deeply that America's future as a democracy depended not on voting—"opinion's wind"—but on submission to the Law.

"Three roots bear up Dominion Knowledge,  
Will—  
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the third,  
Obedience."

Lowell stated to Charles Eliot Norton that the hint for the poem came from a book on Breton legends, by Souvestre. Probably he referred to the tale, "The Washerwomen of Night," in *Le Foyer Breton* (1844).

ALONG a riverside, I know not where,  
I walked one night in mystery of dream,  
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my hair,  
To think what chanced me by the pallid gleam  
Of a moon-wraith that waned through  
haunted air

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-mist  
Their halos, wavering thistledowns of light,  
The loon, that seemed to mock some goblin  
tryst,  
Laughed, and the echoes, huddling in affright,  
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down the  
night 10

Then all was silent, till there smote my ear  
A movement in the stream that checked my  
breath  
Was it the slow splash of a wading deer?  
But something said, "This water is of Death!  
The Sisters<sup>1</sup> wash a shroud,—ill thing to  
hear!"

I, looking then, beheld the ancient Three  
Known to the Greeks and to the Norseman's  
creed,  
That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,  
Still crooning as they weave their endless  
brede,  
One song. "Time was, Time is, and Time  
shall be." 20

<sup>1</sup> the Norns or Fates of Norse mythology who tend the roots of the "mystic Tree," Yggdrasil, which supports the universe

No wrinkled crones were they, as I had  
deemed,  
But fair as yesterday, today, tomorrow,  
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed:  
Something too deep for joy, too high for  
sorrow,  
Thrilled in their tones, and from their faces  
gleamed.

"Still men and nations reap as they have  
strawn,"  
So sang they, working at their task the  
while,—  
"The fatal raiment must be cleansed ere  
dawn  
For Austria? Italy? The Sea-Queen's isle?  
O'er what quenched grandeur must our  
shroud be drawn?" 30

"Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,  
That gathered States like children round his  
knees,  
That tamed the wave to be his posting-horse,  
Feller of forests, linker of the seas,  
Bridge builder, hammerer, youngest son of  
Thor's?"

"What make we, murmur'st thou? and what  
are we?  
When empires must be wound, we bring the  
shroud,  
The time-old web of the implacable Three.  
Is it too coarse for him, the young and proud?  
Earth's mightiest designed to wear it,—why  
not he?" 40

"Is there no hope?" I moaned, "so strong, so  
fair!  
Our Fowler whose proud bird would brook  
erewhile  
No rival's swoop in all our western air!  
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file  
For him, life's morn yet golden in his hair?

"Leave me not hopeless, ye unpitied dames!  
I see, half seeing: tell me, ye who scanned  
The stars, Earth's elders, still must noblest  
aims  
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands? 49  
Must Hesper join the wailing ghosts of names?"

"When grass-blades stiffen with red battle-dew,  
 Ye deem we choose the victor and the slain.  
 Say, choose we them that shall be leal and true  
 To the heart's longing, the high faith of brain?  
 Yet there the victory lies, if ye but knew

"Three roots bear up Dominion: Knowledge,  
 Will,—  
 These twain are strong, but stronger yet the third,  
 Obedience,—'tis the great taproot that still,  
 Knut round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,  
 Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their utmost skill. 60

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper? 'Tis not we  
 Denounce it, but the Law before all time  
 The brave makes danger opportunity,  
 The waverer, paltering with the chance sub-  
 lume,  
 Dwarfs it to peril which shall Hesper be?

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's seat  
 To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their maw?  
 Hath he the Many's plaudits found more sweet  
 Than Wisdom? held Opinion's wind for law? 69  
 Then let him hearken for the doomster's feet!

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest  
 rock,  
 States climb to power by, slippery those with  
 gold  
 Down which they stumble to eternal mock  
 No chafferer's hand shall long the scepter  
 hold,  
 Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the  
 block.

"We sing old sagas, songs of weal and woe,  
 Mystic because too cheaply understood,  
 Dark sayings are not ours. men hear and  
 know,  
 See Evil weak, see strength alone in Good,  
 Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of  
 tow. 80

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time Is,  
 That offers choice of glory or of gloom;  
 The solver makes Time Shall Be surely his.  
 But hasten, Sisters! for even now the tomb  
 Grates its slow hinge and calls from the  
 abyss "

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet for him,  
 Whose large horizon, westering, star by star  
 Wins from the void to where on ocean's  
 rim  
 The sunset shuts the world with golden bar,—  
 Not yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow  
 dim! 90

"His shall be larger manhood, saved for those  
 That walk unblenching through the trial-  
 fires,  
 Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst of  
 woes,  
 And he no base-born son of craven sires,  
 Whose eye need blench confronted with his  
 foes

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for those  
 who win  
 Death's royal purple in the foeman's lines,  
 Peace, too, brings tears, and mid the battle-  
 din,  
 The wiser ear some text of God divines,  
 For the sheathed blade may rust with darker  
 sin 100

"God, give us peace! not such as hurls to  
 sleep,  
 But sword on thigh, and brow with purpose  
 knit!  
 And let our Ship of State to harbor sweep,  
 Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,  
 And her leashed thunders gathering for their  
 leap!"

So said I with clenched hands and passionate  
 pain,  
 Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's side,  
 Again the loon laughed mocking, and again  
 The echoes bayed far down the night and  
 died, 109  
 While, waking, I recalled my wandering brain  
 1861

ODE RECITED AT THE HAR-  
VARD COMMEMORATION

Published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1865. Read on July 21, 1865, at services in memory of the Harvard students who had been killed in the Civil War. The famous stanza concerning President Lincoln was not recited when the poem was delivered but was written immediately afterward. The ninth strophe was added only after magazine publication. Lowell wrote at length concerning the metrical problems in his composition of the ode, January 14, 1877, to J. B. Thayer (*Letters*, II, 189-90). Many years later he wrote to Richard Watson Gilder: "The ode itself was an improvisation. Two days before the commemoration I had told my friend Child that it was impossible—that I was dull as door-mat. But the next day something gave me a jog, and the whole thing came out of me with a rush. I sat up all night writing it out clear, and took it on the morning of the day to Child." F. H. Underwood has given a vivid account of the occasion.

"The Commemoration services took place in the open air, in the presence of a great assembly. Prominent among the speakers were Major-General Meade, the hero of Gettysburg, and Major-General Devens. The wounds of the war were still fresh and bleeding, and the interest of the occasion was deep and thrilling. The summer afternoon was drawing to its close when the poet began the recital of the ode. No living audience could for the first time follow with intelligent appreciation the delivery of such a poem. To be sure, it had its obvious strong points and its sonorous charms, but, like all the later poems of the author, it is full of condensed thought and requires study. The reader today finds many passages whose force and beauty escaped him during the recital, yet the effect of the poem at the time was overpowering. The face of the poet, always angularly expressive, was on this occasion almost transfigured, —glowing, as if with an inward light. It was impossible to look away from it. Our age has furnished many great historic scenes, but this Commemoration combined the elements of grandeur and pathos, and produced an impression as lasting as life."

## 1

WEAK-WINGED is song,  
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height  
Whither the brave deed climbs for light  
We seem to do them wrong,  
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse  
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler  
verse,  
Our trivial song to honor those who come  
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and  
drum,

And shaped in squadron-strophes<sup>1</sup> their de-  
sure,  
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and  
fire: 10

Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,  
A gracious memory to buoy up and save  
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common  
grave  
Of the unventurous throng.

## II

Today our Reverend Mother welcomes back  
Her wisest Scholars, those who under-  
stood

The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,  
And offered their fresh lives to make it  
good

No lore of Greece or Rome,  
No science peddling with the names of  
things, 20

Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,  
Can lift our life with wings  
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many  
waits,

And lengthen out our dates  
With that clear fame whose memory sings  
In many hearts to come, and nerves them and  
dilates.

Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!  
Not such the trumpet-call  
Of thy diviner mood,  
That could thy sons entice 30  
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful  
nest

Of those half-virtues which the world calls  
best,

Into War's tumult rude;  
But rather far that stern device  
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle  
stood

In the dim, unventured wood,  
The VERITAS<sup>2</sup> that lurks beneath  
The letter's unprolific sheath,  
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,  
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food, 40  
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the  
giving.

<sup>1</sup> The *strophe* or turn was sung by one part of the Greek chorus in the delivery of a choral ode, the *antistrophe* or response by the other part of the chorus.  
<sup>2</sup> the motto, meaning "Truth," on the seal of Harvard University

## III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil  
 Amid the dust of books to find her,  
 Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,  
 With the cast mantle she hath left behind  
 her.

Many in sad faith sought for her,  
 Many with crossed hands sighed for her;  
 But these, our brothers, fought for her,  
 At life's dear peril wrought for her,  
 So loved her that they died for her, 50  
 Tasting the raptured fleetness  
 Of her divine completeness.

Their higher instinct knew  
 Those love her best who to themselves are  
 true,

And what they dare to dream of dare to do,  
 They followed her and found her  
 Where all may hope to find,  
 Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,  
 But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round  
 her

Where faith made whole with deed 60  
 Breathes its awakening breath  
 Into the lifeless creed,  
 They saw her plumed and mailed,  
 With sweet, stern face unveiled,  
 And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them  
 in death.

## IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides  
 Into the silent hollow of the past;  
 What is there that abides  
 To make the next age better for the last?  
 Is earth too poor to give us 70  
 Something to live for here that shall out-  
 live us?

Some more substantial boon  
 Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's  
 fickle moon?

The little that we see  
 From doubt is never free;  
 The little that we do  
 Is but half-nobly true;  
 With our laborious hiving  
 What men call treasure, and the gods call  
 dross,

Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving, 80  
 Only secure in every one's conniving,  
 A long account of nothings paid with loss,

Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen  
 wires,

After our little hour of strut and rave,  
 With all our pasteboard passions and desires,  
 Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,  
 Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.  
 But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,  
 Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,  
 For in our likeness still we shape our fate.

Ah, there is something here 91  
 Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,  
 Something that gives our feeble light  
 A high immunity from Night,  
 Something that leaps life's narrow bars  
 To claim its birthright with the hosts of  
 heaven;

A seed of sunshine that can leaven  
 Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,  
 And glorify our clay

With light from fountains elder than the Day;  
 A conscience more divine than we, 101  
 A gladness fed with secret tears,  
 A vexing, forward-reaching sense  
 Of some more noble permanence,  
 A light across the sea,  
 Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,  
 Still beaconing from the heights of unde-  
 generate years

## V

Whither leads the path  
 To ampler fates that leads?  
 Not down through flowery meads, 110  
 To reap an aftermath

Of youth's vainglorious weeds,  
 But up the steep, amid the wrath  
 And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,  
 Where the world's best hope and stay  
 By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,  
 And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.

Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,  
 Ere yet the sharp, decisive word 119  
 Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword  
 Dreams in its easeful sheath,  
 But some day the live coal behind the thought,  
 Whether from Bâal's stone obscene,  
 Or from the shrine serene  
 Of God's pure altar brought,

Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen  
 Learns with what deadly purpose it was  
 fraught,

And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,  
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of  
men:

Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed 130  
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,  
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my  
praise,  
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy  
truth;

I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;  
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,  
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"

Life may be given in many ways,  
And loyalty to Truth be sealed  
As bravely in the closet as the field,  
So bountiful is Fate; 140

But then to stand beside her,  
When craven churls deride her,  
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,  
Thus shows, methinks, God's plan  
And measure of a stalwart man,  
Lambled like the old heroic breeds,

Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid  
earth,

Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,  
Fed from within with all the strength he  
needs.

## VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief, 150  
Whom late the Nation he had led,  
With ashes on her head,  
Wept with the passion of an angry grief-  
Forgive me, if from present things I turn  
To speak what in my heart will beat and  
burn,

And hang my wreath on his world-honored  
urn

Nature, they say, doth dote,  
And cannot make a man  
Save on some worn-out plan,  
Repeating us by rote. 160

For him her Old-World moulds aside she  
threw,

And, choosing sweet clay from the breast  
Of the unexhausted West,  
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,  
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and  
true.

How beautiful to see  
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,

Who loved his charge but never loved to lead;  
One whose meek flock the people joyed to  
be,

Not lured by any cheat of birth, 170  
But by his clear-grained human worth,  
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!  
They knew that outward grace is dust;  
They could not choose but trust  
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,  
And supple-tempered will  
That bent like perfect steel to spring again  
and thrust.

His was no lonely mountain-peak of  
mind,  
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,  
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors  
blind; 180

Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,  
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,  
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest  
stars.

Nothing of Europe here,  
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,  
Ere any names of Serf and Peer  
Could Nature's equal scheme deface  
And thwart her genial will,

Here was a type of the true elder race,  
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us  
face to face. 190

I praise him not; it were too late;  
And some innate weakness there must be  
In him who condescends to victory  
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,  
Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he:  
He knew to bide his time,  
And can his fame abide,  
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,  
Till the wise years decide. 200

Great captains, with their guns and drums,  
Disturb our judgment for the hour,  
But at last silence comes;

These all are gone, and, standing like 'a  
tower,

Our children shall behold his fame,  
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing  
man,

Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not  
blame,

New birth of our new soil, the first Ameri-  
can.



## VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern  
 Or only guess some more inspiring goal 210  
 Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,  
 Along whose course the flying axes burn  
 Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier  
 brood,

Long as below we cannot find  
 The meed that stills the inexorable mind,  
 So long this faith to some ideal Good,  
 Under whatever mortal names it masks,  
 Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood  
 That thanks the Fates for their severer  
 tasks,

Feeling its challenged pulses leap 220  
 While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,  
 And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it  
 asks,

Shall win man's praise and woman's love,  
 Shall be a wisdom that we set above  
 All other skills and gifts to culture dear,  
 A virtue round whose forehead we en-  
 wreath

Laurels that with a living passion breathe  
 When other crowns grow, while we twine  
 them, sear.

What brings us thronging these hugh rites  
 to pay,  
 And seal these hours the noblest of our  
 year, 230

Save that our brothers found this better  
 way?

## VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land  
 That flows with Freedom's honey and milk,  
 But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,  
 Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.

We welcome back our bravest and our  
 best—

Ah mel not all some come not with the  
 rest,  
 Who went forth brave and bright as any  
 here!

I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,  
 But the sad strings complain, 240  
 And will not please the ear:

I sweep them for a psalm, but they wane  
 Again and yet again  
 Into a dirge and die away in pain  
 In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,

Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf  
 wraps,

Dark to the triumph which they died to  
 gain.

Father may others greet the living,  
 For me the past is unforgiving,  
 I with uncovered head 250  
 Salute the sacred dead,

Who went, and who return not —Say not so!  
 'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,  
 But the high faith that failed not by the way;  
 Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave,  
 No ban of endless night exiles the brave,  
 And to the saner mind

We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.  
 Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!  
 For never shall their aureoled presence lack  
 I see them muster in a gleaming row, 261  
 With ever-youthful brows that nobler show,  
 We find in our dull road their shining track,  
 In every nobler mood

We feel the orient of their spirit glow,  
 Part of our life's unalterable good,  
 Of all our sandier aspiration,

They come transfigured back,  
 Secure from change in their hugh-hearied  
 ways,

Beautiful evermore, and with the rays 270  
 Of morn on their white Shields of Expecta-  
 tion!

## IX

But is there hope to save  
 Even this ethereal essence from the grave?  
 Whatever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong  
 Save a few clarion names, or golden threads  
 of song?

Before my musing eye  
 The mighty ones of old sweep by,  
 Disvoiced now and insubstantial things,  
 As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,  
 Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,  
 And many races, nameless long ago, 281  
 To darkness driven by that imperious gust  
 Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow  
 O visionary world, condition strange,  
 Where naught abiding is but only Change,  
 Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still  
 shift and rangel

Shall we to more continuance make pre-  
 sence?

Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;

And, bit by bit,

The cunning years steal all from us but  
woe; 290

Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest  
sow.

But, when we vanish hence,  
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,  
Save to make green their little length of  
sods,

Or deepen pansies for a year or two,  
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?  
Was dying all they had the skill to do?  
That were not fruitless. but the Soul  
resents

Such short-lived service, as if blind events  
Ruled without her, or earth could so en-  
dure; 300

She claims a more divine investiture  
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents,  
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share,  
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,

Gives eyes to mountains blind,  
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,  
And her clear trump sings succor every-  
where

By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind,  
For soul inlients all that soul could dare.

Yea, Manhood liath a wider span 310  
And larger privilege of life than man  
The single deed, the private sacrifice,  
So radiant now through proudly-hidden  
tears,

Is covered up ere long from mortal eyes  
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous  
years,

But that high privilege that makes all men  
peers,

That leap of heart whereby a people rise  
Up to a noble anger's height,

And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink,  
but grow more bright,

That swift validity in noble veins, 320  
Of choosing danger and disdainng shame,  
Of being set on flame

By the pure fire that flies all contact base  
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,

These are impershable gains,

Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,

These hold great futures in their lusty reins  
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

## x

Who now shall sneer?

Who dare again to say, we trace 330

Our lines to a plebeian race?

Roundhead and Cavalier!

Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;  
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,

They fit across the ear—

That is best blood that hath most iron in't  
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint

For what makes manhood dear

Tell us not of Plantagenets,

Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods  
crawl 340

Down from some victor in a border-brawl!

How poor their outworn coronets,  
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic  
wreath

Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,  
Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets  
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears  
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears  
With vain resentments and more vain re-  
grets!

## xi

Not in anger, not in pride,  
Pure from passion's mixture rude 350

Ever to base earth allied,

But with far-heard gratitude,

Sull with heart and voice renewed,

To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,  
The strain should close that consecrates our  
brave

Lift the heart and lift the head!

Lofty be its mood and grave,

Not without a martial ring,

Not without a prouder tread

And a peal of exultation: 360

Little right has he to sing

Through whose heart in such an hour

Beats no march of conscious power,

Sweeps no tumult of elation!

'Tis no Man we celebrate,

By his country's victories great,  
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,

But the pith and marrow of a Nation

Drawing force from all her men,

Highest, humblest, weakest, all, 370

For her time of need, and then

Pulsing it again through them,

Till the basest can no longer cower,  
 Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,  
 Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.  
 Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her  
 dower!

How could poet ever tower,  
 If his passions, hopes, and fears,  
 If his triumphs and his tears,  
 Kept not measure with his people? 380  
 Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and  
 waves!

Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking  
 steeple  
 Banners, advance with triumph, bend your  
 staves!

And from every mountain-peak  
 Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,  
 Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,  
 And so leap on in light from sea to sea,  
 Till the glad news be sent

Across a kindling continent,  
 Making earth feel more firm and air breathe  
 braver: 390

"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have  
 helped to save her!

She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,  
 She of the open soul and open door,  
 With room about her hearth for all man-  
 kind!

The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more,  
 From her bold front the helm she doth  
 unbind,

Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,  
 And bids her navies, that so lately hurled  
 Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,  
 Swimming like birds of calm along the un-  
 harmful shore. 400

No challenge sends she to the elder world,  
 That looked askance and hated, a light  
 scorn

Plays on her mouth, as round her mighty  
 knees

She calls her children back, and waits the  
 morn

Of nobler day, enthroned between her sub-  
 ject seas."

## XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found  
 release!

Thy God, in these distempered days,

Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,  
 And through thine enemies hath wrought thy  
 peace!

Bow down in prayer and praise! 410  
 No poorest in thy borders but may now  
 Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised  
 brow.

O Beautifull my Country! ours once more!  
 Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair  
 O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,

And letting thy set lips,  
 Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,  
 The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,  
 What words divine of lover or of poet 419  
 Could tell our love and make thee know it,  
 Among the Nations bright beyond compare?

What were our lives without thee?  
 What all our lives to save thee?  
 We reck not what we gave thee,  
 We will not dare to doubt thee,  
 But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

1865

## AN ODE

FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1876

Published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1876 Lowell's nationalistic feeling is shown again in this poem. The first section concerns the war for independence and the birth of the American republic. The second contrasts American conditions and civilization with ancient civilizations, such as those of Greece and Rome. The third section sounds a note of disillusionment. The poet is disappointed in present conditions but retains his faith in his country and its future. In the fourth he praises the founders of New England.

"The undaunted few  
 Who changed the Old World for the New,  
 conceived a deeper-rooted state,  
 By making man sole sponsor of himself "

I

I

ENTRANCED I saw a vision in the cloud  
 That loitered dreaming in yon sunset sky,  
 Full of fair shapes, half creatures of the eye,  
 Half chance-evoked by the wind's fantasy  
 In golden mist, an ever-shifting crowd  
 There, mid unreal forms that came and went  
 In robes air-spun, of evanescent dye,  
 A woman's semblance shone pre-eminent;

Not armed like Pallas, not like Hera proud,  
 But, as on household diligence intent, 10  
 Beside her visionary wheel she bent  
 Like Arete or Bertha, nor than they  
 Less queenly in her port: about her knee  
 Glad children clustered confident in play:  
 Placid her pose, the calm of energy;  
 And over her broad brow in many a round  
 (That loosened would have gilt her garment's  
 hem),

Succinct, as toil prescribes, the hair was wound  
 In lustrous coils, a natural diadem  
 The cloud changed shape, obsequious to the  
 whum 20

Of some transmuting influence felt in me,  
 And, looking now, a wolf I seemed to see  
 Limned in that vapor, gaunt and hunger-bold,  
 Threatening her charge. resolve in every  
 limb,

Erect she flamed in mail of sun-wove gold,  
 Penthesilea's self for battle dight,  
 One arm uplifted braced a flickering spear,  
 And one her adamant shield made light;  
 Her face, helm-shadowed, grew a thing to fear,  
 And her fierce eyes, by danger challenged,  
 took 30

Her trident-sceptred mother's dauntless look  
 "I know thee now, O goddess-born!" I cried,  
 And turned with loftier brow and firmer  
 stride,

For in that spectral cloud-work I had seen  
 Her image, bodied forth by love and pride,  
 The fearless, the benign, the mother-eyed,  
 The fairer world's toil-consecrated queen.

2

What shape by exile dreamed elates the mind  
 Like hers whose hand, a fortress of the poor,  
 No blood in vengeance spilt, though lawful,  
 stains? 40

Who never turned a suppliant from her  
 door?

Whose conquests are the gains of all man-  
 kind?

Today her thanks shall fly on every wind,  
 Unstinted, unrebuked, from shore to shore,  
 One love, one hope, and not a doubt behind!  
 Cannon to cannon shall repeat her praise,  
 Banner to banner flap it forth in flame;  
 Her children shall rise up to bless her name,  
 And wish her harmless length of days,

The mighty mother of a mighty brood, 50  
 Blessed in all tongues and dear to every blood,  
 The beautiful, the strong, and, best of all, the  
 good!

3

Seven years long was the bow  
 Of battle bent, and the heightning  
 Storm-heaps convulsed with the throe  
 Of their uncontainable lightning;  
 Seven years long heard the sea  
 Crash of navies and wave-borne thunder;  
 Then drifted the cloud-rack alee,  
 And new stars were seen, a world's wonder; 60  
 Each by her sisters made bright,  
 All binding all to their stations,  
 Cluster of manifold light  
 Startling the old constellations:  
 Men looked up and grew pale:  
 Was it a comet or star,  
 Omen of blessing or bale,  
 Hung o'er the ocean afar?

4

Stormy the day of her birth: 70  
 Was she not born of the strong,  
 She, the last ripeness of earth,  
 Beautiful, prophesied long?  
 Stormy the days of her prime:  
 Hers are the pulses that beat  
 Higher for perils sublime,  
 Making them fawn at her feet.  
 Was she not born of the strong?  
 Was she not born of the wise?  
 Daring and counsel belong  
 Of right to her confident eyes: 80  
 Human and motherly they,  
 Careless of station or race.  
 Harken! her children today  
 Shout for the joy of her face.

11

I

No praises of the past are hers,  
 No fanes by hallowing time caressed,  
 No broken arch that ministers  
 To some sad instinct in the breast:  
 She has not gathered from the years  
 Grandeur of tragedies and tears, 90  
 Nor from long leisure the unrest

That finds repose in forms of classic grace.  
 These may delight the coming race  
 Who haply shall not count it to our crime  
 That we who fain would sing are here before  
 our time

She also hath her monuments,  
 Not such as stand decrepitably resigned  
 To run-mark the path of dead events  
 That left no seed of better days behind,  
 The tourist's pensioners that show their  
 scars 100

And maunder of forgotten wars,  
 She builds not on the ground, but in the mind,  
 Her open-hearted palaces  
 For larger-thoughted men with heaven and  
 earth at ease

Her march the plump mow marks, the sleep-  
 less wheel,  
 The golden sheaf, the self-swayed common-  
 weal,

The happy homesteads hid in orchard trees  
 Whose sacrificial smokes through peaceful air  
 Rise lost in heaven, the household's silent  
 prayer,

What architect hath bettered these? 110  
 With softened eye the westward traveller sees  
 A thousand miles of neighbors side by side,  
 Holding by toil-won titles fresh from God  
 The lands no serf or seigneur ever trod,  
 With manhood latent in the very sod,  
 Where the long billow of the wheat-field's tide  
 Flows to the sky across the prairie wide,  
 A sweeter vision than the castled Rhine,  
 Kindly with thoughts of Ruth and Bible-days  
 benign

## 2

O ancient commonwealths, that we revere 120  
 Haply because we could not know you near,  
 Your deeds like statues down the aisles of  
 Time

Shine peerless in memorial calm sublime,  
 And Athens is a trumpet still, and Rome,  
 Yet which of your achievements is not foam  
 Weighted with this one of hers (below you  
 far

In fame, and born beneath a milder star),  
 That to Earth's orphans, far as curves the  
 dome,

Of death-deaf sky, the bounteous West  
 means home,

With dear precedency of natural ties 130  
 That stretch from roof to roof and made men  
 gently wise?

And if the nobler passions wane,  
 Distorted to base use, if the near goal  
 Of insubstantial gain  
 Tempt from the proper racecourse of the soul  
 That crowns their patient breath  
 Whose feet, song-pinioned, are too fleet for  
 Death,

Yet may she claim one privilege urbane  
 And haply first upon the civic roll,  
 That none can breathe her air nor grow  
 humane. 140

## 3

O, better far the briefest hour  
 Of Athens self-consumed, whose plastic  
 power

Hid Beauty safe from Death in words or  
 stone,

Of Rome, fair quarry where those eagles  
 crowd

Whose fulgurous vans about the world had  
 blown

Triumphant storm and seeds of polity,  
 Of Venice, fading o'er her shipless sea,  
 Last iridescence of a sunset cloud,  
 Than this inert prosperity,

This bovine comfort in the sense alone! 150  
 Yet art came slowly even to such as those,  
 Whom no past genius cheated of their own  
 With prudence of o'er-mastering precedent,  
 Petal by petal spreads the perfect rose,  
 Secure of the divine event;

And only children rend the bud half-blown  
 To forestall Nature in her calm intent  
 Time hath a quiver full of purposes

Which miss not of their aim, to us unknown,  
 And brings about the impossible with ease 160  
 Haply for us the ideal dawn shall break  
 From where in legend-tinted line

The peaks of Hellas drink the morning's wine,  
 To tremble on our lids with mystic sign  
 Till the drowsed ichor in our veins awake  
 And set our pulse in tune with moods di-  
 vine.

Long the day lingered in its sea-fringed nest,  
 Then touched the Tuscan hills with golden  
 lance

And paused; then on to Spain and France

The splendor flew, and Albion's misty  
 crest: 170  
 Shall Ocean bar him from his destined West?  
 Or are we, then arrived too late,  
 Doomed with the rest to grope disconsolate,  
 Foreclosed of Beauty by our modern date?

## III

## I

Poets, as their heads grow gray,  
 Look from too far behind the eyes,  
 Too long-experienced to be wise  
 In guileless youth's diviner way,  
 Life sings not now, but prophecies;  
 Time's shadows they no more behold, 180  
 But, under them, the riddle old  
 That mocks, bewilders, and defies—  
 In childhood's face the seed of shame,  
 In the green tree an ambushed flame,  
 In Phosphor a vaunt-guard of Night,  
 They, though against their will, divine,  
 And dread the care-dispelling wine  
 Stored from the Muse's vintage bright,  
 By age imbued with second-sight.  
 From Faith's own eyelids there peeps out, 190  
 Even as they look, the leer of doubt,  
 The festal wreath their fancy loads  
 With care that whispers and forebodes  
 Nor thus our triumph-day can blunt Megaera's  
 goads

## 2

Murmur of many voices in the air  
 Denounces us degenerate,  
 Unfaithful guardians of a noble fate,  
 And prompts indifference or despair  
 Is this the country that we dreamed in youth,  
 Where wisdom and not numbers should have  
 weight, 200  
 Seed-field of simpler manners, braver truth,  
 Where shams should cease to dominate  
 In household, church, and state?  
 Is this Atlantis? Thus the unpoisoned soil,  
 Sea-whelmed for ages and recovered late,  
 Where parasitic greed no more should coil  
 Round Freedom's stem to bend awry and  
 blight  
 What grew so fair, sole plant of love and light?  
 Who sit where once in crowned seclusion sate  
 The long-proved athletes of debate 210

Trained from their youth, as none thinks  
 needful now?  
 Is thus debating-club where boys dispute,  
 And wrangle o'er their stolen fruit,  
 The Senate, erewhile cloister of the few,  
 Where Clay once flashed and Webster's  
 cloudy brow  
 Brooded those bolts of thought that all the  
 horizon knew?

## 3

O, as this pensive moonlight blurs my pines,  
 Here while I sit and meditate these lines,  
 To gray-green dreams of what they are by  
 day,  
 So would some light, no reason's sharp-edged  
 ray, 220  
 Trance me in moonshine as before the flight  
 Of years had won me this unwelcome right  
 To see things as they are, or shall be soon,  
 In the frank prose of undissembling noon!

## 4

Back to my breast, ungrateful sigh!  
 Whoever fails, whoever errs,  
 The penalty be ours, not hers!  
 The present still seems vulgar, seen too nigh,  
 The golden age is still the age that's past—  
 I ask no drowsy opiate 230  
 To dull my vision of that only state  
 Founded on faith in man, and therefore sure  
 to last  
 For, O, my country, touched by thee,  
 The gray hairs gather back their gold,  
 Thy thought sets all my pulses free,  
 The heart refuses to be old;  
 The love is all that I can see  
 Not to thy natal-day belong  
 Time's prudent doubt or age's wrong,  
 But gifts of gratitude and song 240  
 Unsummoned crowd the thankful words,  
 As sap in springtime floods the tree,  
 Foreboding the return of birds,  
 For all that thou hast been to me!

## IV

## I

Flawless his heart and tempered to the core  
 Who, beckoned by the forward-leaning wave,  
 First left behind him the firm-footed shore,  
 And, urged by every nerve of sail and oar,

Steered for the Unknown which gods to  
 mortals gave,  
 Of thought and action the mysterious door,  
 Bugbear of fools, a summons to the brave: 251  
 Strength found he in the unsympathizing  
 sun,  
 And strange stars from beneath the horizon  
 won,

And the dumb ocean pitilessly grave.  
 High hearted surely he;  
 But bolder they who first off-cast  
 Their moonings from the habitable Past  
 And ventured chartless on the sea  
 Of storm-engendering Liberty  
 For all earth's width of waters is a span, 260  
 And their convulsed existence mere repose,  
 Matched with the unstable heart of man,  
 Shoreless in wants, must-girt in all it knows,  
 Open to every wind of sect or clan,  
 And sudden-passionate in ebbs and flows.

## 2

They steered by stars the elder shupmen knew,  
 And laid their courses where the currents  
 draw

Of ancient wisdom channelled deep in law,  
 The undaunted few  
 Who changed the Old World for the New,  
 And more devoutly prized 271  
 Than all perfection theorized  
 The more imperfect that had roots and grew.  
 They founded deep and well,  
 Those danger-chosen chiefs of men  
 Who still believed in Heaven and Hell,  
 Nor hoped to find a spell,  
 In some fine flourish of a pen,  
 To make a better man  
 That long-considering Nature will or can,  
 Secure against his own mistakes, 281  
 Content with what life gives or takes,  
 And acting still on some fore-ordered plan,  
 A cog of iron in an iron wheel,  
 Too nicely poised to think or feel,  
 Dumb motor in a clock-like commonweal.  
 They wasted not their brain in schemes  
 Of what man might be in some bubble-  
 sphere,  
 As if he must be other than he seems  
 Because he was not what he should be here,  
 Postponing Time's slow proof to petulant  
 dreams. 291

Yet herem they were great  
 Beyond the incredulous lawgivers of yore,  
 And wiser than the wisdom of the shelf,  
 That they conceived a deeper-rooted state,  
 Of harder growth, alive from rind to core,  
 By making man sole sponsor of himself.

## 3

God of our fathers, Thou who wast,  
 Art, and shalt be when those eye-wise who  
 flout  
 Thy secret presence shall be lost 300  
 In the great light that dazzles them to doubt,  
 We, sprung from loins of stalwart men  
 Whose strength was in their trust  
 That Thou wouldst make thy dwelling in their  
 dust  
 And walk with those a fellow-citizen  
 Who build a city of the just,  
 We, who believe Life's bases rest  
 Beyond the probe of chemic test,  
 Still, like our fathers, feel Thee near,  
 Sure that, while lasts the immutable decree,  
 The land to Human Nature dear 311  
 Shall not be unbeloved of Thee.

1876

## TO WHITTIER

## ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

NEW ENGLAND's poet, rich in love as years,  
 Her hills and valleys praise thee, her swift  
 brooks  
 Dance in thy verse; to her grave sylvan nooks  
 Thy steps allure us, which the wood-thrush  
 hears  
 As maids their lovers', and no treason fears,  
 Through thee her Merrimacs and Agiochooks  
 And many a name uncouth win gracious looks,  
 Sweetly familiar to both Englands' ears.

Peaceful by birthright as a virgin lake, 9  
 The lily's anchorage, which no eyes behold  
 Save those of stars, yet for thy brother's  
 sake  
 That lay in bonds, thou blewst a blast as  
 bold  
 As that wherewith the heart of Roland brake,  
 Far heard across the New World and the Old.

1882

## EMERSON THE LECTURER

Published as a review of Emerson's *The Conduct of Life* in the *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1867, and revised in 1868. When in his junior year at Harvard, Lowell heard Emerson lecture. Later he made Emerson's acquaintance at Concord, and the older man took the youth with him on some of his walks. Lowell's account of Emerson as a speaker and teacher is of great interest. (See also the account on page 821 of the effect of Emerson's address, "The American Scholar.")

It is a singular fact that Mr Emerson is the most steadily attractive lecturer in America. Into that somewhat cold-waterish region adventurers of the sensational kind come down now and then with a splash, to become disregarded King Logs<sup>1</sup> before the next season. But Mr Emerson always draws. A lecturer now for something like a third of a century, one of the pioneers of the lecturing system, the charm of his voice, his manner, and his matter has never lost its power over his earlier hearers, and continually winds new ones in its enchanting meshes. What they do not fully understand they take on trust, and listen, saying to themselves, as the old poet<sup>2</sup> of Sir Philip Sidney,—

"A sweet, attractive, kind of grace,  
A full assurance given by looks,  
Continual comfort in a face,  
The lineaments of gospel books."

We call it a singular fact, because we Yankees are thought to be fond of the spread-eagle style, and nothing can be more remote from that than his. We are reckoned a practical folk, who would rather hear about a new air-tight stove than about Plato; yet our favorite teacher's practicality is not in the least of the Poor Richard variety. If he have any Buncombe constituency, it is that unrealized commonwealth of philosophers which Plotinus proposed to establish, and if he were to make an almanac, his directions to farmers would be something like this: "OCTOBER: *Indian Summer*, now is the time to get in your early

<sup>1</sup> Aesop related that when the frogs petitioned Jupiter for a king he sent them down a log, which ruled satisfactorily until they discovered its true nature and rejected it. <sup>2</sup> Matthew Roydon, whose "Elege," paying tribute to Sidney, appeared in the poetical miscellany, *The Phoenix Nest* (1593).

Vedas." What, then, is his secret? Is it not that he out-Yankees us all? that his range includes us all? that he is equally at home with the potato-disease and original sin, with pegging shoes and the Over-Soul? that, as we try all trades, so has he tried all cultures? and above all, that his mysticism gives us a counterpoise to our super-practicality?

There is no man living to whom, as a writer, so many of us feel and thankfully acknowledge so great an indebtedness for ennobling impulses,—none whom so many cannot abide. What does he mean? ask these last. Where is his system? What is the use of it all? What the deuce have we to do with Brahma? I do not propose to write an essay on Emerson at this time. I will only say that one may find grandeur and consolation in a starlit night without caring to ask what it means, save grandeur and consolation, one may like Montaigne, as some ten generations before us have done, without thinking him so systematic as some more eminently tedious (or shall we say tediously eminent?) authors, one may think roses as good in their way as cabbages, though the latter would make a better show in the witness-box, if cross-examined as to their usefulness; and as for Brahma, why, he can take care of himself, and won't bite us at any rate.

The bother with Mr Emerson is, that, though he writes in prose, he is essentially a poet. If you undertake to paraphrase what he says, and to reduce it to words of one syllable for infant minds, you will make as sad work of it as the good monk with his analysis of Homer in the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum*.<sup>1</sup> We look upon him as one of the few men of genius whom our age has produced, and there needs no better proof of it than his masculine faculty of fecundating other minds. Search for his eloquence in his books and you will perchance miss it, but meanwhile you will find that it has kindled all your thoughts. For choice and pith of language he belongs to a better age than ours, and might rub shoulders with Fuller and Browne,—though he does use that abominable word *reliable*. His eye for a fine,

<sup>1</sup> "Letters of Obscure Men," a work of uncertain authorship which appeared early in the sixteenth century.



telling phrase that will carry true is like that of a backwoodsman for a rifle, and he will dredge you up a choice word from the mud of Cotton Mather himself. A diction at once so rich and so homely as his I know not where to match in these days of writing by the page; it is like homespun cloth-of-gold. The many cannot miss his meaning, and only the few can find it. It is the open secret of all true genius. It is wholesome to angle in those profound pools, though one be rewarded with nothing more than the leap of a fish that flashes his freckled side in the sun and as suddenly absconds in the dark and dreamy waters again. There is keen excitement, though there be no ponderable acquisition. If we carry nothing home in our baskets, there is ample gain in dilated lungs and stimulated blood. What does he mean, quotha? He means inspiring hints, a divining-rod to your deeper nature. No doubt, Emerson, like all original men, has his peculiar audience, and yet I know none that can hold a promiscuous crowd in pleased attention so long as he. As in all original men, there is something for every palate. "Would you know," says Goethe, "the ripest cherries? Ask the boys and the blackbirds."

The announcement that such a pleasure as a new course of lectures by him is coming, to people as old as I am, is something like those forebodings of spring that prepare us every year for a familiar novelty, none the less novel, when it arrives, because it is familiar. We know perfectly well what we are to expect from Mr. Emerson, and yet what he says always penetrates and stirs us, as is apt to be the case with genius, in a very unlooked-for fashion. Perhaps genius is one of the few things which we gladly allow to repeat itself,—one of the few that multiply rather than weaken the force of their impression by iteration? Perhaps some of us hear more than the mere words, are moved by something deeper than the thoughts? If it be so, we are quite right, for it is thirty years and more of "plain living and high thinking"<sup>1</sup> that speak to us in this altogether unique lay-preacher. We have shared in the beneficence of this varied culture, thus fearless impartiality

in criticism and speculation, this masculine sincerity, this sweetness of nature which rather stimulates than cloy, for a generation long. If ever there was a standing testimonial to the cumulative power and value of Character (and we need it sadly in these days), we have it in this gracious and dignified presence. What an antiseptic is a pure life! At sixty-five (or two years beyond his grand climacteric, as he would prefer to call it) he has that privilege of soul which abolishes the calendar, and presents him to us always the unwasted contemporary of his own prime. I do not know if he seem old to his younger hearers, but we who have known him so long wonder at the tenacity with which he maintains himself even in the outposts of youth. I suppose it is not the Emerson of 1868 to whom we listen. For us the whole life of the man is distilled in the clear drop of every sentence, and behind each word we divine the force of a noble character, the weight of a large capital of thinking and being. We do not go to hear what Emerson says so much as to hear Emerson. Not that we perceive any falling-off in anything that ever was essential to the charm of Mr. Emerson's peculiar style of thought or phrase. The first lecture, to be sure, was more disjointed even than common. It was as if, after vainly trying to get his paragraphs into sequence and order, he had at last tried the desperate expedient of *shuffling* them. It was chaos come again, but it was a chaos full of shooting-stars, a jumble of creative forces. The second lecture, on "Criticism and Poetry," was quite up to the level of old times, full of that power of strangely subtle association whose indirect approaches startle the mind into almost painful attention, of those flashes of mutual understanding between speaker and hearer that are gone ere one can say it lightens. The vice of Emerson's criticism seems to be, that while no man is so sensitive to what is poetical, few men are less sensible than he of what makes a poem. He values the solid meaning of thought above the subtler meaning of style. He would prefer Donne, I suspect, to Spenser, and sometimes mistakes the queer for the original.

To be young is surely the best, if the most precarious, gift of life, yet there are some of us

<sup>1</sup> from Wordsworth's sonnet, "Written in London, 1802"

who would hardly consent to be young again, if it were at the cost of our recollection of Mr. Emerson's first lectures during the consulate<sup>1</sup> of Van Buren. We used to walk in from the country to the Masonic Temple (I think it was), through the crisp winter night, and listen to that thrilling voice of his, so charged with subtle meaning and subtle music, as shipwrecked men on a raft to the hail of a ship that came with un hoped-for food and rescue. 10 Cynics might say what they liked. Did our own imaginations transfigure dry remainder-biscuit<sup>2</sup> into ambrosia? At any rate, he brought us *life*, which, on the whole, is no bad thing. Was it all transcendentalism? magic-lantern pictures on mist? As you will. Those, then, were just what we wanted. But it was not so. The delight and the benefit were that he put us in communication with a larger style of thought, sharpened our wits with a more 20 pungent phrase, gave us ravishing glimpses of an ideal under the dry husk of our New England, made us conscious of the supreme and everlasting originality of whatever bit of soul might be in any of us; freed us, in short, from the stocks of prose in which we had sat so long that we had grown well-nigh contented in our cramps. And who that saw the audience will ever forget it, where every one still capable of fire, or longing to renew in himself 30 the half-forgotten sense of it, was gathered? Those faces, young and old, agleam with pale intellectual light, eager with pleased attention, flash upon me once more from the deep recesses of the years with an exquisite pathos. Ah, beautiful young eyes, brimming with love and hope, wholly vanished now in that outer world we call the Past, or peering doubtfully through the pensive gloaming of memory, your light impoverishes these 40 cheaper days! I hear again that rustle of sensation, as they turned to exchange glances over some pithier thought, some keener flash of that humor which always played about the horizon of his mind like heat-lightning, and it seems now like the sad whisper of the autumn leaves that are whirling around me

But would my picture be complete if I forgot that ample and vegete<sup>1</sup> countenance of Mr. R——, of W——,—how, from its regular post at the corner of the front bench, it turned in ruddy triumph to the profaner audience as if he were the inexplicably appointed fagelman of appreciation? I was reminded of him by those hearty cherubs in Titian's Assumption<sup>2</sup> that look at you as who should say, "Did you ever see a Madonna like *that*? Did you ever behold one hundred and fifty pounds of womanhood mount heavenward before like a rocket?"

To some of us that long-past experience remains as the most marvellous and fruitful we have ever had. Emerson awakened us, saved us from the body of this death. It is the sound of the trumpet that the young soul longs for, careless what breath may fill it. Sidney heard it in the ballad of "Chevy Chase,"<sup>3</sup> and we in Emerson. Nor did it blow retreat, but called to us with assurance of victory. Did they say he was disconnected? So were the stars, that seemed larger to our eyes, still keen with that excitement, as we walked homeward with prouder stride over the creaking snow. And were they not knit together by a higher logic than our mere sense could master? Were we enthusiasts? I hope and believe we were, and am thankful to the man who made us worth something for once in our lives. If asked what was left? what we carried home? we should not have been careful for an answer. It would have been enough if we had said that something beautiful had passed that way. Or we might have asked in return what one brought away from a symphony of Beethoven? Enough that he had set that ferment of wholesome discontent at work in us. There is one, at least, of those old hearers, so many of whom are now in the fruition of that intellectual beauty of which Emerson gave them both the desire and the foretaste, who will always love to repeat:—

<sup>1</sup> ruddy, healthy    <sup>2</sup> This famous painting depicts the Virgin ascending toward the throne on glowing clouds and surrounded by rejoicing angels. The amazed apostles look upward from below.    <sup>3</sup> Sidney wrote in his *Defense of Poetry* (1595) "Certainly I must confess mine own barbarousness, I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than by a trumpet."

<sup>1</sup> i. e., presidency. Lowell is here, like Thoreau in the account of the battle of the ants, parodying the Roman historians' method of dating by consulships.  
<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, II, vii, 39.

"Che in la mente m' è fitta, ed or m' acciura  
La cara e buona immagine paterna  
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora  
M' inagnavaste come l' uom s' eterna."<sup>1</sup>

I am unconsciously thinking, as I write, of the third lecture of the present course, in which Mr. Emerson gave some delightful reminiscences of the intellectual influences in whose movement he had shared. It was like hearing Goethe read some passages of the *Wahrheit aus seinem Leben*.<sup>2</sup> Not that there was not a little *Dichtung*,<sup>3</sup> too, here and there, as the lecturer built up so lofty a pedestal under certain figures as to lift them into a prominence of obscurity, and seem to masthead them there. Everybody was asking his neighbor who this or that recondite great man was, in the faint hope that somebody might once have heard of him. There are those who call Mr. Emerson cold. Let them revise their judgment in presence of this loyalty of his that can keep warm for half a century, that never forgets a friendship, or fails to pay even a fancied obligation to the uttermost farthing. Thus substantiation of shadows was but incidental, and pleasantly characteristic of the man to those who know and love him. The greater part of the lecture was devoted to reminiscences of things substantial in themselves. He spoke of Everett, fresh from Greece and Germany; of Channing; of the translations of Margaret Fuller, Ripley, and Dwight; of the *Dial* and Brook Farm. To what he said of the latter an undertone of good-humored irony gave special zest. But what every one of his hearers felt was that the protagonist in the drama was left out. The lecturer was no *Aeneas* to babble the *quorum magna pars fuit*,<sup>4</sup> and, as one of his listeners, I cannot help wishing to say how each of them was commenting the story as it went along, and filling up the necessary gaps in it from his own private store of memories. His younger hearers could not know how much they owed to the benign

impersonality, the quiet scorn of everything ignoble, the never-sated hunger of self-culture, that were personified in the man before them. But the older knew how much the country's intellectual emancipation was due to the stimulus of his teaching and example, how constantly he had kept burning the beacon of an ideal life above our lower region of turmoil. To him more than to all other causes together did the young martyrs of our civil war owe the sustaining strength of thoughtful heroism that is so touching in every record of their lives. Those who are grateful to Mr. Emerson, as many of us are, for what they feel to be most valuable in their culture, or perhaps I should say their impulse, are grateful not so much for any direct teachings of his as for that inspiring lift which only genius can give, and without which all doctrine is chaff.

This was something like the *caret* which some of us older boys wished to fill up on the margin of the master's lecture. Few men have been so much to so many, and through so large a range of aptitudes and temperaments, and thus simply because all of us value manhood beyond any or all other qualities of character. We may suspect in him, here and there, a certain thinness and vagueness of quality, but let the waters go over him as they list, this masculine fibre of his will keep its lively color and its toughness of texture. I have heard some great speakers and some accomplished orators, but never any that so moved and persuaded men as he. There is a kind of undertow in that rich baritone of his that sweeps our minds from their foothold into deeper waters with a drift we cannot and would not resist. And how artfully (for Emerson is a long-studied artist in these things) does the deliberate utterance, that seems waiting for the fit word, appear to admit us partners in the labor of thought and make us feel as if the glance of humor were a sudden suggestion, as if the perfect phrase lying written there on the desk were as unexpected to him as to us! In that closely filed speech of his at the Burns centenary dinner, every word seemed to have just dropped down to him from the clouds. He looked far away over the heads of his hearers, with a vague kind of expectation, as into some private heaven of

<sup>1</sup> Dante's *Inferno*, XV, 82-85. Longfellow's translation reads

"For in my mind is fixed, and touches now  
My heart, the dear and good paternal image  
Of you, when in the world from hour to hour  
You taught me how a man becomes eternal."

<sup>2</sup> "Truth from His Life"    <sup>3</sup> "Poetry"    <sup>4</sup> "Of which things I was a great part" (*Aeneid*, II, 6)

invention, and the winged period came at last obedient to his spell. "My dainty Ariel"<sup>1</sup> he seemed murmuring to himself as he cast down his eyes as if in deprecation of the frenzy of approval and caught another sentence from the Sibylline leaves that lay before him, ambushed behind a dish of fruit and seen only by nearest neighbors. Every sentence brought down the house, as I never saw one brought down before,—and it is not so easy to hit 10 Scotsmen with a sentiment that has no hint of native brogue in it. I watched, for it was an interesting study, how the quick sympathy ran flashing from face to face down the long tables, like an electric spark thrilling as it went, and then exploded in a thunder of plaudits. I watched till tables and faces vanished, for I, too, found myself caught up in the common enthusiasm, and my excited fancy set me under the *bema*<sup>2</sup> listening to him 20 who fulminated over Greece. I can never help applying to him what Ben Jonson said of Bacon: "There happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke." Those who heard him while their natures were yet plastic, and their mental nerves trembled under the slightest breath of divine air, will never cease to feel and say:—

"Was never eye did see that face,  
Was never ear did hear that tongue,  
Was never mind did mind his grace,  
That ever thought the travail long;  
But eyes, and ears, and every thought,  
Were with his sweet perfections caught."<sup>3</sup>

1861

## THOREAU

First appeared in the *North American Review*, 1865. It is now included in Lowell's *Prose Works*. I it is to be compared with Emerson's essay on

Thoreau. A brilliantly written discussion, it is rather characteristic in structure. Lowell was given to long introductions before reaching his real subjects. He is usually thought to have been more or less unjust to Thoreau, but at the end of this essay there is a fine tribute to him. See also the characterization of Thoreau in *A Fable for Critics*.

WHAT contemporary, if he was in the fighting period of his life, (since Nature sets limits about her conscription for spiritual fields, as the state does in physical warfare,) will ever forget what was somewhat vaguely called the "Transcendental Movement" of thirty years ago? Apparently set astray by Carlyle's essays on the *Signs of the Times*, and on *History*, the final and more immediate impulse seemed to be given by Sartor Resartus. At least the republication in Boston of that wonderful Abraham à Sancta-Clara sermon on Lear's text of the miserable forked radish<sup>1</sup> gave the signal for mental and moral mutiny. *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile*<sup>2</sup> was shouted on all hands with every variety of emphasis, and by voices of every conceivable pitch, representing the three sexes of men, women, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The nameless eagle of the tree Yggdrasil was about to sit at last, and wild-eyed enthusiasts rushed from all sides, each eager to thrust under the mystic bird that chalk egg from which the new and fairer Creation was to be hatched in due time. *Redeunt Saturnia regna*,<sup>3</sup>—so far was certain, though in what shape, or by what methods, was still a matter of debate. Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Bran had its prophets, and the presartorial simplicity of Adam its martyrs, tailored impromptu from the tar-pot by incensed neighbors, and sent forth to illustrate the "feathered Mercury," as defined by Webster and Worcester. Plainness of speech was carried to a pitch that would have taken away the breath of George Fox, and even swearing had its evangelists, who answered a simple inquiry after their health with an elaborate ingenuity of imprecation that might have been honorably mentioned by

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare's *Tempest*, V, i, 95. <sup>2</sup> "rostrum", probably a reference to Lowell's enthusiasm for Demosthenes. <sup>3</sup> Lowell quotes a second time from Roydon's "Elegie."

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, III, 2. The "text" is Falstaff's, not Lear's. <sup>2</sup> "Behold now is the acceptable time." <sup>3</sup> "The Saturnian reign returns," meaning that a new Golden Age appears.

Marlborough in general orders. Everybody had a mission (with a capital M) to attend to everybody-else's business. No brain but had its private maggots, which must have found pitifully short commons sometimes. Not a few impecunious zealots abjured the use of money (unless earned by other people), professing to live on the internal revenues of the spirit. Some had an assurance of instant millennium so soon as hooks and eyes should be substituted for buttons. Communities were established where everything was to be common but common sense. Men renounced their old gods, and hesitated only whether to bestow their furloughed allegiance on Thor or Budh. Conventions were held for every hitherto inconceivable purpose. The belated gift of tongues, as among the Fifth Monarchy men,<sup>1</sup> spread like a contagion, rendering its victims incomprehensible to all Christian men; whether equally so to the most distant possible heathen or not was unexperimented, though many would have subscribed liberally that a fair trial might be made. It was the pentecost of Shinar.<sup>2</sup> The day of utterances reproduced the day of rebuses and anagrams, and there was nothing so simple that uncial letters and the style of Diphilus the Labyrinth could not make into a riddle. Many foreign revolutionists out of work added to the general misunderstanding their contribution of broken English in every most ingenious form of fracture. All stood ready at a moment's notice to reform everything but themselves. The general motto was:

And we'll talk with them, too,  
And take upon's the mystery of things  
As if we were God's spies.<sup>3</sup>

Nature is always kind enough to give even her clouds a humorous lining. I have barely hinted at the comic side of the affair, for the material was endless. This was the whistle and trailing fuse of the shell, but there was a very solid and serious kernel, full of the most deadly explosiveness. Thoughtful men divined it,

<sup>1</sup> a fanatical English sect of the Commonwealth period, who believed that a fifth monarchy (to succeed the four of ancient times) was to come soon in which Christ would reign on earth for a thousand years

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 11:1-8    <sup>3</sup> Shakespeare's *King Lear*, V, iii, 14-17

but the generality suspected nothing. The word "transcendental" then was the maid of all work for those who could not think, as "Pre-Raphaelite" has been more recently for people of the same limited housekeeping. The truth is, that there was a much nearer metaphysical relation and a much more distant aesthetic and literary relation between Carlyle and the Apostles of the Newness, as they were called in New England, than has commonly been supposed. Both represented the reaction and revolt against *Philistines*,<sup>1</sup> a renewal of the old battle begun in modern times by Erasmus and Reuchlin, and continued by Lessing, Goethe, and, in a far narrower sense, by Heine in Germany, and of which Fielding, Sterne, and Wordsworth in different ways have been the leaders in England. It was simply a struggle for fresh air, in which, if the windows could not be opened, there was danger that panes would be broken, though painted with images of saints and martyrs. Light colored by these reverend effigies was none the more respirable for being picturesque. There is only one thing better than tradition, and that is the original and eternal life out of which all tradition takes its rise. It was this life which the reformers demanded, with more or less clearness of consciousness and expression, life in politics, life in literature, life in religion. Of what use to import a gospel from Judaea, if we leave behind the soul that made it possible, the God who keeps it forever real and present? Surely Abana and Pharpar are better than Jordan, if a living faith be mixed with those waters and none with these.

Scotch Presbyterianism as a motive of spiritual progress was dead, New England Puritanism was in like manner dead, in other words, Protestantism had made its fortune and no longer protested, but till Carlyle spoke out in the Old World and Emerson in the New, no one had dared to proclaim, *Le roi est mort vive le roi!*<sup>2</sup> The meaning of which proclamation was essentially this: the vital spirit has long since departed out of this form once so kingly, and the great seal has

<sup>1</sup> a term used by German university students, meaning "outsiders", hence uncultured, Philistines    <sup>2</sup> "The King is dead long live the King!"

been in commission long enough; but meanwhile the soul of man, from which all power emanates and to which it reverts, still survives in undiminished royalty; God still survives, little as you gentlemen of the Commission seem to be aware of it,—nay, may possibly outlive the whole of you, incredible as it may appear. The truth is, that both Scotch Presbyterianism and New England Puritanism made their new avatars in Carlyle and Emerson, the heralds of their formal decease, and the tendency of the one toward Authority and of the other toward Independency might have been prophesied by whoever had studied history. The necessity was not so much in the men as in the principles they represented and the traditions which overruled them. The Puritanism of the past found its unwilling poet in Hawthorne, the rarest creative imagination of the century, the rarest in some ideal respects since Shakespeare, but the Puritanism that cannot die, the Puritanism that made New England what it is, and is destined to make America what it should be, found its voice in Emerson. Though holding himself aloof from all active partnership in movements of reform, he has been the sleeping partner who has supplied a great part of their capital.

The artistic range of Emerson is narrow, as every well-read critic must feel at once, and so is that of Æschylus, so is that of Dante, so is that of Montaigne, so is that of Schiller, so is that of nearly every one except Shakespeare; but there is a gauge of height no less than of breadth, of individuality as well as of comprehensiveness, and, above all, there is the standard of genetic power, the test of the masculine as distinguished from the receptive minds. There are staminate plants in literature, that make no fine show of fruit, but without whose pollen, the quintessence of fructifying gold, the garden had been barren. Emerson's mind is emphatically one of these, and there is no man to whom our æsthetic culture owes so much. The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically, and the Revolution politically independent, but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought, till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and the glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can

forget, or cease to be grateful for, the mental and moral *nudge* which he received from the writings of his high-minded and brave-spirited countryman. That we agree with him, or that he always agrees with himself, is aside from the question, but that he arouses in us something that we are the better for having awakened, whether that something be of opposition or assent, that he speaks always to what is highest and least selfish in us, few Americans of the generation younger than his own would be disposed to deny. His oration<sup>1</sup> before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, some thirty years ago, was an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent! It was our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard, our Harvard parallel to the last public appearances of Schelling.

We said that the "Transcendental Movement" was the protestant spirit of Puritanism seeking a new outlet and an escape from forms and creeds which compressed rather than expressed it. In its motives, its preaching, and its results, it differed radically from the doctrine of Carlyle. The Scotchman, with all his genius, and his humor gigantesque as that of Rabelais, has grown shriller and shriller with years, degenerating sometimes into a common scold, and emptying very unsavory vials of wrath on the head of the sturdy British Socrates of worldly common sense. The teaching of Emerson tended much more exclusively to self-culture and the independent development of the individual man. It seemed to many almost Pythagorean in its voluntary seclusion from commonplace affairs. Both Carlyle and Emerson were disciples of Goethe, but Emerson in a far truer sense; and while the one, from his bias toward the eccentric, has degenerated more and more into mannerism, the other has clarified steadily toward perfection of style,—exquisite fineness of material, unobtrusive lowness of tone and simplicity of

<sup>1</sup> "The American Scholar," see the selections from Emerson, pp. 642-658

fashion, the most high-bred garb of expression. Whatever may be said of his thought, nothing can be finer than the delicious limpidness of his phrase. If it was ever questionable whether democracy could develop a gentleman, the problem has been affirmatively solved at last. Carlyle, in his cynicism and his admiration of force in and for itself, has become at last positively inhuman, Emerson, reverencing strength, seeking the highest outcome of the individual, has found that society and politics are also main elements in the attainment of the desired end, and has drawn steadily manward and worldward. The two men represent respectively those grand personifications in the drama of *Æschylus*, *Βία* and *Κράτος*<sup>1</sup>

Among the pistillate plants kindled to fruitage by the Emersonian pollen, Thoreau is thus far the most remarkable, and it is something eminently fitting that his posthumous works should be offered us by Emerson, for they are strawberries from his own garden. A singular mixture of varieties, indeed, there is,—alpine, some of them, with the flavor of rare mountain air, others wood, tasting of sunny roadside banks or shy openings in the forest, and not a few seedlings swollen hugely by culture, but lacking the fine natural aroma of the more modest kinds. Strange books these are of his, and interesting in many ways,—instructive chiefly as showing how considerable a crop may be raised on a comparatively narrow close of mind, and how much a man may make of his life if he will assiduously follow it, though perhaps never truly finding it at last.

I have just been renewing my recollection of Mr. Thoreau's writings, and have read through six volumes in the order of their production. I shall try to give an adequate report of their impression upon me both as critic and as mere reader. He seems to me to have been a man with so high a conceit of himself that he accepted without questioning, and insisted on our accepting, his defects and weaknesses of character as virtues and powers peculiar to himself. Was he indolent, he finds none of the

activities which attract or employ the rest of mankind worthy of him. Was he wanting in the qualities that make success, it is success that is contemptible, and not himself that lacks persistency and purpose. Was he poor, money was an unmixed evil. Did his life seem a selfish one, he condemns doing good as one of the weakest of superstitions. To be of use was with him the most killing bait of the wily tempter Uselessness. He had no faculty of generalization from outside of himself, or at least no experience which would supply the material of such, and he makes his own whim the law, his own range the horizon of the universe. He condemns a world, the hollowness of whose satisfactions he had never had the means of testing, and we recognize Apeman-tus<sup>1</sup> behind the mask of Timon. He had little active imagination, of the receptive he had much. His appreciation is of the highest quality, his critical power, from want of continuity of mind, very limited and inadequate. He somewhere cites a simile from Ossian, as an example of the superiority of the old poetry to the new, though, even were the historic evidence less convincing, the sentimental melancholy of those poems should be conclusive of their modernness. He had none of the artistic mastery such as controls a great work to the serene balance of completeness, but exquisite mechanical skill in the shaping of sentences and paragraphs, or (more rarely) short bits of verse for the expression of a detached thought, sentiment, or image. His works give one the feeling of a sky full of stars,—something impressive and exhilarating certainly, something high overhead and freckled thickly with spots of isolated brightness, but whether these have any mutual relation with each other, or have any concern with our mundane matters, is for the most part matter of conjecture,—astrology as yet, and not astronomy.

It is curious, considering what Thoreau afterwards became, that he was not by nature an observer. He only saw the things he looked for, and was less poet than naturalist. Till he built his Walden shanty, he did not know that the hickory grew in Concord. Till he went to

<sup>1</sup> "Power" and "Force," two symbolic characters in *Prometheus Bound*, who carry Prometheus up the mountain and constrain him while Hephaestus fastens him to the rock.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare's "churlish philosopher" in *Timon of Athens*.

Maine, he had never seen phosphorescent wood, a phenomenon early familiar to most country boys. At forty he speaks of the seeding of the pine as a new discovery, though one should have thought that its gold-dust of blowing pollen might have earlier drawn his eye. Neither his attention nor his genius was of the spontaneous kind. He discovered nothing. He thought everything a discovery of his own, from moonlight to the planting of acorns and nuts by squirrels. This is a defect in his character, but one of his chief charms as a writer. Everything grows fresh under his hand. He dived in his mind and nature; he planted them with all manner of native and foreign seeds, and reaped assiduously. He was not merely solitary, he would be isolated, and succeeded at last in almost persuading himself that he was autochthonous.<sup>1</sup> He valued everything in proportion as he fancied it to be exclusively his own. He complains in *Walden* that there is no one in Concord with whom he could talk of Oriental literature, though the man<sup>2</sup> was living within two miles of his hut who had introduced him to it. This intellectual selfishness becomes sometimes almost painful in reading him. He lacked that generosity of "communication" which Johnson admired in Burke. De Quincey tells us that Wordsworth was impatient when any one else spoke of mountains, as if he had a peculiar property in them. And we can readily understand why it should be so, no one is satisfied with another's appreciation of his mistress. But Thoreau seems to have prized a lofty way of thinking (often we should be inclined to call it a remote one) not so much because it was good in itself as because he wished few to share it with him. It seems now and then as if he did not seek to lure others up "above our lower region of turmoil," but to leave his own name cut on the mountain peak as the first climber. This itch of originality infects his thought and style. To be misty is not to be mystic. He turns commonplaces end for end, and fancies it makes something new of them. As we walk down Park Street, our eye is caught by Dr. Winship's dumb-bells, one of which bears an inscription testifying that it is the heaviest ever put up at arm's length

by any athlete, and in reading Mr. Thoreau's books we cannot help feeling as if he sometimes invited our attention to a particular sophism or paradox as the biggest yet maintained by any single writer. He seeks, at all risks, for perversity of thought, and revives the age of *concerts*<sup>1</sup> while he fancies himself going back to a pre-classical nature. "A day," he says, "passed in the society of those Greek sages, such as described in the Banquet of Xenophon, would not be comparable with the dry wit of decayed cranberry-vines and the fresh Attic salt of the moss-beds." It is not so much the True that he loves as the Out-of-the-Way. As the Brazen Age shows itself in other men by exaggeration of phrase, so in him by extravagance of statement. He wishes always to trump your suit and to *ruff*<sup>2</sup> when you least expect it. Do you love Nature because she is beautiful? He will find a better argument in her ugliness. Are you tired of the artificial man? He instantly dresses you up an ideal in a Penobscot Indian, and attributes to this creature of his otherwise-mindedness as peculiarities things that are common to all woodsmen, white or red, and thus simply because he has not studied the pale-faced variety.

This notion of an absolute originality, as if one could have a patent-right in it, is an absurdity. A man cannot escape in thought, any more than he can in language, from the past and the present. As no one ever invents a word, and yet language somehow grows by general contribution and necessity, so it is with thought. Mr. Thoreau seems to us to insist in public on going back to flint and steel, when there is a match-box in his pocket which he knows very well how to use at a pinch. Originality consists in power of digesting and assimilating thoughts, so that they become part of our life and substance. Montaigne, for example, is one of the most original of authors, though he helped himself to ideas in every direction. But they turn to blood and coloring in his style, and give a freshness of complexion that is forever charming. In Thoreau much seems yet to be foreign and unassimilated, showing itself in symptoms of indigestion. A preacher-up of Nature, we now and

<sup>1</sup> aboriginal, native    <sup>2</sup> Emerson

<sup>1</sup> "concerts," affectations    <sup>2</sup> in cards, to trump when void in the suit led



then detect under the surly and stoic garb something of the sophist and the sentimentalizer. I am far from implying that this was conscious on his part. But it is much easier for a man to impose on himself when he measures only with himself. A greater familiarity with ordinary men would have done Thoreau good, by showing him how many fine qualities are common to the race. The radical vice of his theory of life was, that he confounded physical with spiritual remoteness from men. A man is far enough withdrawn from his fellows if he keep himself clear of their weaknesses. He is not so truly withdrawn as exiled, if he refuse to share in their strength. It is a morbid self-consciousness that pronounces the world of men empty and worthless before trying it, the instinctive evasion of one who is sensible of some innate weakness, and retorts the accusation of it before any has made it but himself. To a healthy mind, the world is a constant challenge of opportunity. Mr. Thoreau had not a healthy mind, or he would not have been so fond of prescribing. His whole life was a search for the doctor. The old mystics had a wiser sense of what the world was worth. They ordained a severe apprenticeship to law and even ceremonial, in order to the gaining of freedom and mastery over these. Seven years of service for Rachel were to be rewarded at last with Leah. Seven other years of faithfulness with her were to win them at last the true bride of their souls. Active Life was with them the only path to the Contemplative.

Thoreau had no humor, and this implies that he was a sorry logician. Himself an artist in rhetoric, he confounds thought with style when he undertakes to speak of the latter. He was forever talking of getting away from the world, but he must be always near enough to it, nay, to the Concord corner of it, to feel the impression he makes there. He verifies the shrewd remark of Sainte-Beuve, "*On touche encore à son temps et très-fort, même quand on le repousse.*"<sup>1</sup> This egotism of his is a Stylites pillar<sup>2</sup> after all, a seclusion which keeps him

in the public eye. The dignity of man is an excellent thing, but therefore to hold one's self too sacred and precious is the reverse of excellent. There is something delightfully absurd in six volumes addressed to a world of such "vulgar fellows" as Thoreau affirmed his fellow-men to be. I once had a glimpse of a genuine solitary who spent his winters one hundred and fifty miles beyond all human communication, and there dwelt with his rifle, as his only confidant. Compared with this, the shanty on Walden Pond has something the air, it must be confessed, of the Hermitage of La Chevrete.<sup>1</sup> I do not believe that the way to a true cosmopolitanism carries one into the woods or the society of musquashes.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the narrowest provincialism is that of Self; that of Kleinwinkel<sup>3</sup> is nothing to it. The natural man, like the singing birds, comes out of the forest as inevitably as the natural bear and the wildcat stuck there. To seek to be natural implies a consciousness that forbids all naturalness forever. It is as easy—and no easier—to be natural in a *salon* as in a swamp, if one do not aim at it, for what we call unnaturalness always has its spring in a man's thinking too much about himself. "It is impossible," said Turgot "for a vulgar man to be simple."

I look upon a great deal of the modern sentimentalism about Nature as a mark of disease. It is one more symptom of the general liver-complaint. In a man of wholesome constitution the wilderness is well enough for a mood or a vacation, but not for a habit of life. Those who have most loudly advertised their passion for seclusion and their intimacy with nature, from Petrarch down, have been mostly sentimentalists, unreal men, misanthropes on the spindle side, solacing an uneasy suspicion of themselves by professing contempt for their kind. They make demands on the world in advance proportioned to their inward measure of their own merit, and are angry that the world pays only by the visible measure

Stylites, who lived for thirty years on a pillar said to have been sixty feet high.

<sup>1</sup> "The Hermitage" was a cottage fitted up for Rousseau by Mme. Épinay in the grounds of her country home, La Chevrete. <sup>2</sup> Canadian muskrats

<sup>3</sup> "little corner," a quite insignificant hamlet

<sup>1</sup> "One continually touches his time and powerfully, even when he resists it." <sup>2</sup> A pillar on top of which lived one of the ascetics known as stylites. They received the name from their famous founder, Simeon

of performance. It is true of Rousseau, the modern founder of the sect, true of St. Pierre, his intellectual child, and of Chateaubriand, his grandchild, the inventor of what we may call the primitive forest cure and who first was touched by the solemn falling of a tree from natural decay in the windless silence of the woods. It is a very shallow view that affirms trees and rocks to be healthy, and cannot see that men in communities are just as true to the laws of their organization and destiny, that can tolerate the puffin and the fox, but not the fool and the knave, that would shun politics because of its demagogues, and snuff up the stench of the obscene fungus. The divine life of Nature is more wonderful, more various, more sublime in man than in any other of her works, and the wisdom that is gained by commerce with men, as Montaigne and Shakespeare gained it, or with one's own soul among men, as Dante, is the most delightful, as it is the most precious, of all. In outward nature it is still man that interests us, and we care far less for the things seen than the way in which they are seen by poetic eyes like Wordsworth's or Thoreau's, and the reflections they cast there. To hear the to-do that is often made over the simple fact that a man sees the image of himself in the outward world, one is reminded of a savage when he for the first time catches a glimpse of himself in a looking-glass "Venerable child of Nature," we are tempted to say, "to whose science in the invention of the tobacco-pipe, to whose art in the tattooing of thine undergenerate hide not yet enslaved by tailors, we are slowly striving to climb back, the miracle thou beholdest is sold in my unhappy country for a shilling!" If matters go on as they have done, and everybody must needs blab of all the favors that have been done him by roadside and river-brink and woodland walk, as if to kiss and tell were no longer treachery, it will be a positive refreshment to meet a man who is as superbly indifferent to Nature as she is to him. By and by we shall have John Smith, of No. — 12, — 12th Street, advertising that he is not the J. S. who saw a cow-lily on Thursday last, as he never saw one in his life, would not see one if he could, and is prepared to prove an alibi on the day in question

Solitary communion with Nature does not seem to have been sanitary or sweetening in its influence on Thoreau's character. On the contrary, his letters show him more cynical as he grew older. While he studied with respectful attention the monks and woodchucks, his neighbors, he looked with utter contempt on the august drama of destiny of which his country was the scene, and on which the curtain had already risen. He was converting us back to a state of nature "so eloquently," as Voltaire said of Rousseau, "that he almost persuaded us to go on all fours," while the wiser fates were making it possible for us to walk erect for the first time. Had he conversed more with his fellows, his sympathies would have widened with the assurance that his peculiar genius had more appreciation, and his writings a larger circle of readers, or at least a warmer one, than he dreamed of. We have the highest testimony<sup>1</sup> to the natural sweetness, sincerity, and nobleness of his temper, and in his books an equally irrefragable one to the rare quality of his mind. He was not a strong thinker, but a sensitive feeler. Yet his mind strikes us as cold and wintry in its purity. A light snow has fallen everywhere where he seems to come on the track of the shier sensations that would elsewhere leave no trace. I think greater compression would have done more for his fame. A feeling of sameness comes over us as we read so much. Trifles are recorded with an over-minute punctuality and conscientiousness of detail. He registers the state of his personal thermometer thirteen times a day. I cannot help thinking sometimes of the man who

watches, starves, freezes, and sweats  
To learn but catechisms and alphabets  
Of uninteresting things, matters of fact,

and sometimes of the saying of the Persian poet, that "when the owl would boast, he boasts of catching mice at the edge of a hole." We could readily part with some of his affectations. It was well enough for Pythagoras to say, once for all, "When I was Euphorbus at the siege of Troy"; not so well for Thoreau

<sup>1</sup> "Mr Emerson, in the Biographical Sketch prefixed to the *Excursions*" [Lowell's note]

to travesty it into "When I was a shepherd on the plains of Assyria." A naive thing said over again is anything but naive. But with every exception, there is no writing comparable with Thoreau's in kind, that is comparable with it in degree where it is best; where it disengages itself, that is, from the tangled roots and dead leaves of a second-hand Orientalism, and runs limpid and smooth and broadening as it runs, a mirror for whatever is grand and lovely in both worlds

George Sand says neatly, that "Art is not a study of positive reality," (*actuality* were the fitter word,) "but a seeking after ideal truth." It would be doing very inadequate justice to Thoreau if we left it to be inferred that this ideal element did not exist in him, and that too in larger proportion, if less obtrusive, than his nature-worship. He took nature as the mountain-path to an ideal world. If the path wind a good deal, if he record too faithfully every trip over a root, if he botanize somewhat wearisomely, he gives us now and then superb outlooks from some jutting crag, and brings us out at last into an illimitable ether, where the breathing is not difficult for those who have any true touch of the climbing spirit. His shanty-life was a mere impossibility, so far as his own conception of it goes, as an entire independency of mankind. The tub of Diogenes had a sounder bottom. Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilization which it theoretically abjured. He squatted on another man's land, he borrows an axe, his boards, his nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books, his lamp, his fishhooks, his plow, his hoe, all turn state's evidence against him as an accomplice in the sin of that artificial civilization which rendered it possible that such a person as Henry D. Thoreau should exist at all. *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*<sup>1</sup> His aim was a noble and a useful one, in the direction of "plain living and high thinking." It was a practical sermon on Emerson's text that "things are in the saddle and ride mankind,"<sup>2</sup> an attempt to solve Carlyle's problem of "lessening your de-

nominator." His whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery. He had "fine translunary things" in him. His better style as a writer is in keeping with the simplicity and purity of his life. We have said that his range was narrow, but to be a master is to be a master. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days; his literature was extensive and recondite; his quotations are always nuggets of the purest ore, there are sentences of his as perfect as anything in the language, and thoughts as clearly crystallized, his metaphors and images are always fresh from the soil, he had watched Nature like a detective who is to go upon the stand, as we read him, it seems as if all-out-of-doors had kept a diary and become its own Montaigne, we look at the landscape as in a Claude Lorrain glass, compared with his, all other books of similar aim, even White's *Selborne*, seem dry as a country clergyman's meteorological journal in an old almanac. He belongs with Donne and Browne and Novalis, if not with the originally creative men, with the scarcely smaller class who are peculiar, and whose leaves shed their invisible thought-seed like ferns.

1865

#### From NEW ENGLAND TWO CENTURIES AGO

Printed in the *North American Review*, January, 1865. Included later in *Among My Books* (1870), and to be found now in *Prose Works*, II. Ostensibly a review of the third volume of J. G. Palfrey's *History of England During the Stuart Dynasty* and of four volumes of *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*. Lowell's nationalism appears in this article. He is concerned with the nature of freedom and with the principles of democracy, their historic genesis and development. The essay views in retrospect the people of New England, their region, history, and political faith. The author is concerned, too, with the relations of England and the new nation. He derives New England democracy from the Puritan tradition of civil liberty in the mother country.

The history of New England is written unpershalably on the face of a continent, and in

<sup>1</sup> "He failed, nevertheless, in great attempts" (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II, 338). <sup>2</sup> lines 50-51 of Emerson's "Ode Inscribed to W. E. Channing" (see p. 641).

characters as beneficent as they are enduring. In the Old World national pride feeds itself with the record of battles and conquests;—battles which proved nothing and settled nothing; conquests which shifted a boundary on the map, and put one ugly head instead of another on the coin which the people paid to the tax-gatherer. But wherever the New-Englander travels among the sturdy common-wealths which have sprung from the seed of the Mayflower, churches, schools, colleges, tell him where the men of his race have been, or their influence penetrated, and an intelligent freedom is the monument of conquests whose results are not to be measured in square miles. Next to the fugitives whom Moses led out of Egypt, the little ship-load of outcasts who landed at Plymouth two centuries and a half ago are destined to influence the future of the world. The spiritual thirst of mankind has for ages been quenched at Hebrew fountains, but the embodiment in human institutions of truths uttered by the Son of man eighteen centuries ago was to be mainly the work of Puritan thought and Puritan self-devotion. Leave New England out in the cold! While you are plotting it, she sits by every fireside in the land where there is piety, culture, and free thought.

Faith in God, faith in man, faith in work,—this is the short formula in which we may sum up the teaching of the founders of New England, a creed ample enough for this life and the next. If their municipal regulations smack somewhat of Judaism, yet there can be no nobler aim or more practical wisdom than theirs, for it was to make the law of man a living counterpart of the law of God, in their highest conception of it. Were they too earnest in the strife to save their souls alive? That is still the problem which every wise and brave man is lifelong in solving. If the Devil take a less hateful shape to us than to our fathers, he is as busy with us as with them, and if we cannot find it in our hearts to break with a gentleman of so much worldly wisdom, who gives such admirable dinners, and whose manners are so perfect, so much the worse for us.

Looked at on the outside, New England history is dry and unpicturesque. There is no

rustle of silks, no waving of plumes, no clink of golden spurs. Our sympathies are not awakened by the changeful destinies, the rise and fall, of great families, whose doom was in their blood. Instead of all this, we have the homespun fates of Cephas and Prudence repeated in an infinite series of peaceable sameness, and finding space enough for record in the family Bible, we have the noise of axe and hammer and saw, an apotheosis<sup>1</sup> of dogged work, where, reversing the fairy-tale, nothing is left to luck, and, if there be any poetry, it is something that cannot be helped,—the waste of the water over the dam. Extrinsically, it is prosaic and plebeian, intrinsically, it is poetic and noble; for it is, perhaps, the most perfect incarnation of an idea the world has ever seen. That idea was not to found a democracy, nor to charter the city of New Jerusalem by an act of the General Court, as gentlemen seem to think whose notions of history and human nature rise like an exhalation from the good things at a Pilgrim Society dinner. Not in the least. They had no faith in the Divine institution of a system which gives Teague, because he can dig, as much influence as Ralph, because he can think, nor in personal at the expense of general freedom. Their view of human rights was not so limited that it could not take in human relations and duties also. They would have been likely to answer the claim, "I am as good as anybody," by a quiet "Yes, for some things, but not for others, as good, doubtless, in your place, where all things are good." What the early settlers of Massachusetts *did* intend, and what they accomplished, was the founding here of a new England, and a better one, where the political superstitions and abuses of the old should never have leave to take root. So much, we may say, they deliberately intended. No nobles, either lay or cleric, no great landed estates, and no universal ignorance as the seed-plot of vice and unreason; but an elective magistracy and clergy, land for all who would till it, and reading and writing, will ye nill ye, instead. Here at last, it would seem, simple manhood is to have a chance to play his stake against Fortune with honest dice, uncogged<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> glorification  
"loaded"

<sup>2</sup> uncontrolled by trickery, not

by those three hoary sharpers, Prerogative, Patricianism, and Priestcraft. Whoever has looked into the pamphlets published in England during the Great Rebellion cannot but have been struck by the fact, that the principles and practice of the Puritan Colony had begun to react with considerable force on the mother country; and the policy of the retrograde party there, after the Restoration, in its dealings with New England, finds a curious parallel as to its motives (time will show whether as to its results) in the conduct of the same party towards America during the last four years.<sup>1</sup> This influence and this fear alike bear witness to the energy of the principles at work here

We have said that the details of New England history were essentially dry and unpoetic. Everything is near, authentic, and petty. There is no mist of distance to soften outlines, no mirage of tradition to give characters and events an imaginative loom. So much downright work was perhaps never wrought on the earth's surface in the same space of time as during the first forty years after the settlement. But mere work is unpicturesque, and void of sentiment. Irving instinctively divined and admirably illustrated in his "Knickerbocker" the humorous element which lies in this nearness of view, this clear, prosaic daylight of modernness, and this poverty of stage properties, which makes the actors and the deeds they were concerned in seem ludicrously small when contrasted with the semi-mythic grandeur in which we have clothed them, as we look backward from the crowned result, and fancy a cause as majestic as our conception of the effect. There was, indeed, one poetic side to the existence otherwise so narrow and practical, and to have conceived this, however partially, is the one original and American thing in Cooper. This diviner glimpse illumines the lives of our Daniel Boones, the man of civilization and old-world ideas confronted with our forest solitudes,—confronted, too, for the first time, with his real self, and so led gradually to disentangle the original substance of his manhood from the artificial results of culture. Here was our new Adam of the wilderness,

forced to name anew, not the visible creation of God, but the invisible creation of man, in those forms that lie at the base of social institutions, so insensibly moulding personal character and controlling individual action. Here is the protagonist of our New World epic, a figure as poetic as that of Achilles, as ideally representative as that of Don Quixote, as romantic in its relation to our homespun and plebeian mythos as Arthur in his to the mailed and plumed cycle of chivalry. We do not mean, of course, that Cooper's "Leatherstocking" is all this or anything like it, but that the character typified in him is ideally and potentially all this and more.

But whatever was poetical in the lives of the early New-Englanders had something shy, if not somber, about it. If their natures flowered, it was out of sight, like the fern. It was in the practical that they showed their true quality, as Englishmen are wont. It has been the fashion lately with a few feeble-minded persons to undervalue the New England Puritans, as if they were nothing more than gloomy and narrow-minded fanatics. But all the charges brought against these large-minded and far-seeing men are precisely those which a really able fanatic, Joseph de Maistre, lays at the door of Protestantism. Neither a knowledge of human nature nor of history justifies us in confounding, as is commonly done, the Puritans of Old and New England, or the English Puritans of the third with those of the fifth decade of the seventeenth century. Fanaticism, or, to call it by its milder name, enthusiasm, is only powerful and active so long as it is aggressive. Establish it firmly in power, and it becomes conservatism, whether it will or no. A scepter once put in the hand, the grip is instinctive, and he who is firmly seated in authority soon learns to think security, and not progress, the highest lesson of statecraft. From the summit of power men no longer turn their eyes upward, but begin to look about them. Aspiration sees only one side of every question, possession, many. And the English Puritans, after their revolution was accomplished, stood in even a more precarious position than most successful assailants of the prerogative of whatever is to continue in being. They had

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, 1860-1864

carried a political end by means of a religious revival. The fulcrum on which they rested their lever to overturn the existing order of things (as history always placidly calls the particular forms of *disorder* for the time being) was in the soul of man. They could not renew the fiery gush of enthusiasm, when once the molten metal had begun to stiffen in the mould of policy and precedent. The religious element of Puritanism became insensibly merged in the political, and, its one great man taken away, it died, as passions have done before, of possession. It was one thing to shout with Cromwell before the battle of Dunbar, "Now, Lord, arise, and let thine enemies be scattered!" and to snuffle, "Rise, Lord, and keep us safe in our benefices, our sequestered estates, and our five per cent!" Puritanism meant something when Captain Hodgson,<sup>1</sup> riding out to battle through the morning mist, turns over the command of his troop to a lieutenant, and stays to hear the prayer of a cornet, there was "so much of God in it." Become traditional, repeating the phrase without the spirit, reading the present backward as if it were written in Hebrew, translating Jehovah by "I was" instead of "I am,"—it was no more like its former self than the hollow drum made of Ziska's skin<sup>2</sup> was like the grim captain whose soul it had once contained. Yet the change was inevitable, for it is not safe to confound the things of Caesar with the things of God. Some honest republicans, like Ludlow, were never able to comprehend the chilling contrast between the ideal aim and the material fulfilment, and looked askance on the strenuous reign of Oliver,—that rugged boulder of primitive manhood lying lonely there on the dead level of the century,—as if some crooked changeling had been laid in the cradle instead of that fair babe of the Commonwealth they had

dreamed. Truly there is a tide in the affairs of men, but there is no gulf-stream setting forever in one direction; and those waves of enthusiasm on whose crumbling crests we sometimes see nations lifted for a gleaming moment are wont to have a gloomy trough before and behind.

But the founders of New England, though they must have sympathized vividly with the struggles and triumphs of their brethren in the mother country, were never subjected to the same trials and temptations, never hampered with the same lumber of usages and tradition. They were not driven to win power by doubtful and desperate ways, nor to maintain it by any compromises of the ends which make it worth having. From the outset they were builders, without need of first pulling down, whether to make room or to provide material. For thirty years after the colonization of the Bay, they had absolute power to mould as they would the character of their adolescent commonwealth. During this time a whole generation would have grown to manhood who knew the Old World only by report, in whose habitual thought kings, nobles, and bishops would be as far away from all present and practical concern as the figures in a fairy-tale, and all whose memories and associations, all their unconscious training by eye and ear, were New English only. Nor were the men whose influence was greatest in shaping the framework and the policy of the Colony, in any true sense of the word, fanatics. Enthusiasts, perhaps, they were, but with them the fermentation had never gone further than the ripeness of the vinous stage. Disappointment had never made it acetous, nor had it ever putrefied into the turbid zeal of Fifth Monarchism and sectarian whimsey. There is no better ballast for keeping the mind steady on its keel, and saving it from all risk of *crankiness*, than business. And they were business men, men of facts and figures no less than of religious earnestness. The sum of two hundred thousand pounds had been invested in their undertaking,—a sum, for that time, truly enormous as the result of private combination for a doubtful experiment. That their enterprise might succeed, they must show a balance on the right side of the count-

<sup>1</sup> This story may be found in Carlyle's account of the day before the battle of Dunbar in his *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, Part VI. <sup>2</sup> When John Ziska was near death, legend tells that he gave instructions that his skin should be tanned and used to make a drum to be carried at the head of the Bohemian armies, with the idea that it might produce the same consternation in the ranks of his country's enemies as had always been caused by the presence of the great general himself.

ing-house ledger, as well as in their private accounts with their own souls. The liberty of praying when and how they would, must be balanced with an ability of paying when and as they ought. Nor is the resulting fact in this case at variance with the *a priori* theory. They succeeded in making their thought the life and soul of a body politic, still powerful, still benignly operative, after two centuries, a thing which no mere fanatic ever did or ever will accomplish. Sober, earnest, and thoughtful men, it was no Utopia, no New Atlantis, no realization of a splendid dream, which they had at heart, but the establishment of the divine principle of Authority on the common interest and the common consent, the making, by a contribution from the free-will of all, a power which should curb and guide the free-will of each for the general good. If they were stern in their dealings with sectaries, it should be remembered that the Colony was in fact the private property of the Massachusetts Company, that unity was essential to its success, and that John of Leyden had taught them how unendurable by the nostrils of honest men is the corruption of the right of private judgment in the evil and selfish hearts of men when no thorough mental training has developed the understanding and given the judgment its needful means of comparison and correction. They knew that liberty in the hands of feeble-minded and unreasoning persons (and all the worse if they are honest) means nothing more than the supremacy of their particular form of imbecility, means nothing less, therefore, than downright chaos, a Bedlam-chaos of monomaniacs and bores. What was to be done with men and women, who bore conclusive witness to the fall of man by insisting on walking up the broad-aisle of the meeting-house in a costume which that event had put forever out of fashion? About their treatment of witches, too, there has been a great deal of ignorant babble. Puritanism had nothing whatever to do with it. They acted under a delusion, which, with an exception here and there (and those mainly medical men, like Wierus and Webster), darkened the understanding of all Christendom. Dr. Henry More was no Puritan, and his letter to Glanvil, prefixed to the third

edition of the *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, was written in 1678, only fourteen years before the trials at Salem. Bekker's *Bezauberter Welt*<sup>1</sup> was published in 1693; and in the Preface he speaks of the difficulty of overcoming "the prejudices in which not only ordinary men, but the learned also, are obstinate." In Hathaway's case, 1702, Chief-Justice Holt, in charging the jury, expresses no disbelief in the possibility of witchcraft, and in the indictment implies its existence. Indeed, the natural reaction from the Salem mania of 1692 put an end to belief in devilish compacts and demonic possessions sooner in New England than elsewhere. The last we hear of it there is in 1720, when Rev. Mr. Turell of Medford detected and exposed an attempted cheat by two girls. Even in 1692, it was the foolish breath of Cotton Mather and others of the clergy that blew the dying embers of this ghastly superstition into a flame; and they were actuated partly by a desire to bring about a religious revival, which might stay for a while the hastening lapse of their own authority, and still more by that credulous scepticism of feeble-minded piety which dreads the cutting away of an orthodox tumor of misbelief, as if the life-blood of faith would follow, and would keep even a stumbling-block in the way of salvation, if only enough generations had tripped over it to make it venerable. The witches were condemned on precisely the same grounds that in our day led to the condemnation of *Essays and Reviews*.<sup>2</sup>

But Puritanism was already in the decline when such things were possible. What had been a wondrous and intimate experience of the soul, a flash into the very crypt and basis of man's nature from the fire of trial, had become ritual and tradition. In prosperous times the faith of one generation becomes the formality of the next. "The necessity of reforma-

<sup>1</sup> *The Enchanted World*. A volume, published in 1860, made up of seven essays on religious subjects, each by a very distinguished English liberal or broad-church thinker. *Replies to Essays and Reviews* appeared a year later, but time has settled the matter largely in favor of the liberals. One essay in *Essays and Reviews* is still of importance to present-day scholars. Mark Pattison's "Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750."

tion," set forth by order of the Synod which met at Cambridge in 1679, though no doubt overstating the case, shows how much even at that time the ancient strictness had been loosened. The country had grown rich, its commerce was large, and wealth did its natural work in making life softer and more worldly, commerce in deprovincializing the minds of those engaged in it. But Puritanism had already done its duty. As there are certain creatures whose whole being seems occupied with an egg-laying errand they are sent upon, incarnate ovispositors, their bodies but bags to hold this precious deposit, their legs of use only to carry them where they may safest get rid of it, so sometimes a generation seems to have no other end than the conception and ripening of certain germs. Its blind stirrings, its apparently aimless seeking hither and thither, are but the driving of an instinct to be done with its parturient function toward these principles of future life and power. Puritanism, believing itself quick with the seed of religious liberty, laid, without knowing it, the egg of democracy. The English Puritans pulled down church and state to rebuild Zion on the ruins, and all the while it was not Zion, but America, they were building. But if their millennium went by, like the rest, and left men still human, if they, like so many saints and martyrs before them, listened in vain for the sound of that trumpet which was to summon all souls to a resurrection from the body of this death which men call life,—it is not for us, at least, to forget the heavy debt we owe them. It was the drums of Naseby and Dunbar that gathered the minute-men on Lexington Common, it was the red dint of the axe on Charles's block that marked One in our era. The Puritans had their faults. They were narrow, ungenial, they could not understand the text, "I have piped to you and ye have not danced," nor conceive that saving one's soul should be the cheerfullest, and not the dreariest, of businesses. Their preachers had a way, like the painful Mr. Perkins, of pronouncing *damn* with such an emphasis as left a doleful echo in their auditors' ears a good while after. And it was natural that men who captained or accompanied the exodus from existing forms and associations into the doubt-

ful wilderness that led to the promised land, should find more to their purpose in the Old Testament than in the New. As respects the New England settlers, however visionary some of their religious tenets may have been, their political ideas savored of the reality, and it was no *Nephelococcygia*<sup>1</sup> of which they drew the plan, but of a commonwealth whose foundation was to rest on solid and familiar earth. If what they did was done in a corner, the results of it were to be felt to the ends of the earth; and the figure of Winthrop should be as venerable in history as that of Romulus is barbarously grand in legend.

I am inclined to think that many of our national characteristics, which are sometimes attributed to climate and sometimes to institutions, are traceable to the influences of Puritan descent. We are apt to forget how very large a proportion of our population is descended from emigrants who came over before 1660. Those emigrants were in great part representatives of that element of English character which was most susceptible of religious impressions, in other words, the most earnest and imaginative. Our people still differ from their English cousins (as they are fond of calling themselves when they are afraid we may do them a mischief) in a certain capacity for enthusiasm, a devotion to abstract principle, an openness to ideas, a greater aptness for intuitions than for the slow processes of the syllogism, and, as derivative from this, in rounds of looser texture, a light-armed, skirmishing habit of thought, and positive preference of the birds in the bush,—an excellent quality of character *before* you have your bird in the hand.

There have been two great distributing centers of the English race on this continent, Massachusetts and Virginia. Each has impressed the character of its early legislators on the swarms it has sent forth. Their ideas are in some fundamental respects the opposites of each other, and we can only account for it by an antagonism of thought beginning with the early framers of their respective institutions. New England abolished caste; in Virginia they still talk of "quality folks." But it was in making education not only common to all,

<sup>1</sup> "Cloud-cuckoo-town" in *The Birds* of Aristophanes.



but in some sense compulsory on all, that the destiny of the free republics of America was practically settled Every man was to be trained, not only to the use of arms, but of his wits also, and it is these which alone make the other effective weapons for the maintenance of freedom. You may disarm the hands, but not the brains, of a people, and to know what should be defended is the first condition of successful defense Simple as it seems, it was a great discovery that the key of knowledge could turn both ways, that it could open, as well as lock, the door of power to the many. The only things a New-Englander was ever locked out of were the jails. It is quite true that our Republic is the heir of the English Commonwealth, but as we trace events backward to their causes, we shall find it true also, that what made our Revolution a foregone conclusion was that act of the General Court, passed in May, 1647, which established the system of common schools. "To the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers in Church and Commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors, it is therefore ordered by this Court and authority thereof, that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their towns to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read "

Passing through some Massachusetts village, perhaps at a distance from any house, it may be in the midst of a piece of woods where four roads meet, one may sometimes even yet see a small square one-story building, whose use would not be long doubtful. It is summer, and the flickering shadows of forest-leaves dapple the roof of the little porch, whose door stands wide, and shows, hanging on either hand, rows of straw hats and bonnets, that look as if they had done good service. As you pass the open windows, you hear whole platoons of high-pitched voices discharging words of two or three syllables with wonderful precision and unanimity. Then there is a pause, and the voice of the officer in command is heard reproving some raw recruit whose vocal musket hung fire. Then the drill of the small infantry begins anew, but pauses again

because some urchin—who agrees with Voltaire that the superfluous is a very necessary thing—insists on spelling "subtraction" with an *s* too much

If you had the good fortune to be born and bred in the Bay State, your mind is thronged with half-sad, half-humorous recollections. The a-b abs of little voices long since hushed in the mould, or ringing now in the pulpit, at the bar, or in the Senate-chamber, come back to the ear of memory. You remember the high stool on which culprits used to be elevated with the tall paper fool's-cap on their heads, blushing to the ears, and you think with wonder how you have seen them since as men climbing the world's penance-stools of ambition without a blush, and gladly giving everything for life's cap and bells. And you have pleasanter memories of going after pond-hiles, of angling for horn-pouts,—that queer bar among the fishes,—of nutting, of walking over the creaking snow-crust in winter, when the warm breath of every household was curling up silently in the keen blue air. You wonder if life has any rewards more solid and permanent than the Spanish dollar that was hung around your neck to be restored again next day, and conclude sadly that it was but too true a prophecy and emblem of all worldly success. But your moralizing is broken short off by a rattle of feet and the pouring forth of the whole swarm,—the boys dancing and shouting,—the mere effervescence of the fixed air of youth and animal spirits uncorked,—the sedate girls in confidential twos and threes decanting secrets out of the mouth of one cape-bonnet into that of another. Times have changed since the jackets and trousers used to draw up on one side of the road, and the petticoats on the other, to salute with bow and courtesy the white neckcloth of the parson or the squire, if it chanced to pass during intermission.

Now this little building, and others like it, were an original kind of fortification invented by the founders of New England. They are the martello-towers that protect our coast. This was the great discovery of our Puritan forefathers. They were the first lawgivers who saw clearly and enforced practically the

simple moral and political truth, that knowledge was not an alms to be dependent on the chance charity of private men or the precarious pittance of a trust-fund, but a sacred debt which the Commonwealth owed to every one of her children. The opening of the first grammar-school was the opening of the first trench against monopoly in church and state, the first row of trammels and pothooks which the little Shearjashubs and Elkanahs 10 blotted and blubbered across their copy-books, was the preamble to the Declaration of Independence. The men who gave every man the chance to become a landholder, who made the transfer of land easy, and put knowledge within the reach of all, have been called narrow-minded, because they were intolerant. But intolerant of what? Of what they believed to be dangerous nonsense, which, if left free, would destroy the last hope 20 of civil and religious freedom. They had not come here that every man might do that which seemed good in his own eyes, but in the sight of God. Toleration, moreover, is something which is won, not granted. It is the equilibrium of neutralized forces. The Puritans had no notion of tolerating mischief. They looked upon their little commonwealth as upon their private estate and homestead, as they had a right to do, and would no more 30 allow the Devil's religion of unreason to be preached therein, than we should permit a prize-fight in our gardens. They were narrow, in other words they had an edge to them, as men that serve in great emergencies must, for a Gordian knot is settled sooner with a sword than a beetle.

The founders of New England are commonly represented in the after-dinner oratory of their descendants as men "before their 40 time," as it is called, in other words, deliberately prescient of events resulting from new relations of circumstances, or even from circumstances new in themselves, and therefore altogether alien from their own experience. Of course, such a class of men is to be reckoned among those non-existent human varieties so gravely catalogued by the ancient naturalists. If a man could shape his action with reference to what should happen a 50 century after his death, surely it might be

asked of him to call in the help of that easier foreknowledge which reaches from one day to the next,—a power of prophecy whereof we have no example. I do not object to a wholesome pride of ancestry, though a little mythical, if it be accompanied with the feeling that *noblesse oblige*,<sup>1</sup> and do not result merely in a placid self-satisfaction with our own mediocrity, as if greatness, like righteousness, could be imputed. We can pardon it even in conquered races, like the Welsh and Irish, who make up to themselves for present degradation by imaginary empires in the past whose boundaries they can extend at will, carrying the bloodless conquests of fancy over regions laid down upon no map, and concerning which authentic history is enviously dumb. Those long beadrolls of Kelc 10 kings cannot tyrannize over us, and we can be patient so long as our own crowns are uncracked by the shillalah scepters of their actual representatives. In our own case, it would not be amiss, perhaps, if we took warning by the example of Teague and Taffy. At least, I think it would be wise in our orators not to put forward so prominently the claim of the Yankee to universal dominion, and his intention to enter upon it forthwith. If we do 20 our duties as honestly and as much in the fear of God as our forefathers did, we need not trouble ourselves much about other titles to empire. The broad foreheads and long heads will win the day at last in spite of all heraldry, and it will be enough if we feel as keenly as our Puritan founders did that those organs of empire may be broadened and lengthened by culture.<sup>2</sup> That our self-complacency should not increase the complacency of outsiders is not to be wondered at. As we sometimes take 30 credit to ourselves (since all commendation of our ancestry is indirect self-flattery) for what the Puritan fathers never were, so there are others who, to gratify a spite against their descendants, blame them for not having been what they could not be, namely, before their time in such matters as slavery, witchcraft,

<sup>1</sup> "nobility obligates"      <sup>2</sup> "It is curious, that, when Cromwell proposed to transfer a colony from New England to Ireland, one of the conditions insisted on in Massachusetts was that a college should be established." [Lowell's note]

and the like. The view, whether of friend or foe, is equally unhistorical, nay, without the faintest notion of all that make history worth having as a teacher. That our grandfathers shared in the prejudices of their day is all that makes them human to us, and that nevertheless they could act bravely and wisely on occasion makes them only the more venerable. If certain barbarisms and superstitions disappeared earlier in New England than elsewhere, not by the decision of exceptionally enlightened or humane judges, but by force of public opinion, that is the fact that is interesting and instructive for us. I never thought it an abatement of Hawthorne's genius that he came lineally from one who sat in judgment on the witches in 1692, it was interesting rather to trace something hereditary in the somber character of his imagination, continually vexing itself to account for the origin of evil, and baffled for want of that simple solution in a personal Devil.

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I have little sympathy with declaimers about the Pilgrim Fathers, who look upon them all as men of grand conceptions and superhuman foresight. An entire ship's

company of Columbuses is what the world never saw. It is not wise to form any theory and fit our facts to it, as a man in a hurry is apt to cram his travelling-bag, with a total disregard of shape or texture. But perhaps it may be found that the facts will only fit comfortably together on a single plan, namely, that the fathers did have a conception (which those will call grand who regard simplicity as a necessary element of grandeur) of founding here a commonwealth on those two eternal bases of Faith and Work, that they had, indeed, no revolutionary ideas of universal liberty, but yet, what answered the purpose quite as well, an abiding faith in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, and that they did not so much propose to make all things new, as to develop the latent possibilities of English law and English character, by clearing away the fences by which the abuse of the one was gradually discommuning the other from the broad fields of natural right. They were not in advance of their age, as it is called, for no one who is so can ever work profitably in it; but they were alive to the highest and most earnest thinking of their time.

1864

1865

## 1809 ~ Edgar Allan Poe ~ 1849

THE LIFE of Edgar Allan Poe, like those of the storm-and-stress geniuses of the Old World, such as Byron, De Musset, or Heine, contrasts strongly with the well-regulated lives of our other men of letters. Not a derivative of the Puritans like Bryant and Hawthorne, not a Yankee like Franklin, no product of or laureate of the country like Whittier, he was the spokesman of no region. There was no other genius of his type. He was of nervous mentality, super-sensitive, and lacking in self-control. His heredity was not one that promised much health or strength of resistance, and his environment was not favorable for the artistic ambition. His life was tragic and frustrated. Yet with Whitman, he is one of the two American poets acclaimed by Europeans.

Poe was born in Boston, January 19, 1809, the second son of poor strolling players. His father was of a Baltimore family; his mother, Elizabeth Arnold, an

English actress of considerable talent. Young and delicately beautiful, she held leading parts in her theatrical troupe, and was the main support of the family. After Poe was born, the troupe remained in Boston to complete an engagement, then wandered off on a Southern circuit. Poe's father disappeared after July, 1810, within a few weeks of the birth of a third child, a daughter, and the mother was left in abject poverty with three small children. She died in Richmond, December 8, 1811, while still in her early twenties.

Almost from the start Poe was without real parental sympathy and guidance. At his mother's death it was his fortune to be taken into the family of John Allan at the wish of his wife. The boy was treated as a son for some years, though he was never formally adopted. Allan was later, when an inheritance was left him, to become a wealthy tobacco merchant in Richmond. Poe was made much of by Mrs. Allan and perhaps rather pampered by her. When Allan attempted to establish a branch of his tobacco business in England, 1815-1820, Poe was taken with him and was sent to several schools in England and Scotland, especially to the Manor House School, at Stoke-Newington. The influence of these years is perhaps responsible for Poe's recurrent references to castles, old tombs, mists, and isles in the sea.

The six years following 1820 were spent in Richmond, where Poe led the life of a youth of social standing, reading, studying, and being tutored. He became liked less and less by Allan, who was perhaps indulgent and exacting by turns. That the boy's temperament was scarcely normal is hinted in an early romance of this period. He had a schoolboy adoration for an older woman, the mother of a classmate, and when she died in 1824 he haunted her grave. This idolatry is recorded in the poem "To Helen." There was perhaps another sentimental attachment during these years in a boyish engagement to a girl slightly younger than himself.

In February, 1826, when he was seventeen, Poe matriculated at the newly established University of Virginia of which Thomas Jefferson was the special patron. Some of its principal courses were in ancient and modern languages, courses which then included ancient history and geography. Poe was a brilliant student, winning firsts in both French and Latin, and he was good in debate; but he seems to have had something of a name for drinking. At Christmas, 1827, he was withdrawn from school by Mr. Allan, who was angered at his large number of unpaid bills, especially gambling debts, said to have totalled more than two thousand dollars. Poe explained his gambling as a desperate attempt to remain in school, brought on by Allan's parsimony toward him. It is possible that Allan, wishing to get rid of him, sent him little or no money. After a quarrel with Allan in March, 1827, Poe left home, apparently taking with him a bundle of poems. In April he was in Boston where he published anonymously *Tamerlane and Other Poems* from the press of a young friend. The little volume, the publication of a boy of eighteen, made no great stir. On May 26, under the name of Edgar A. Perry, Poe enlisted in the United States

battery of artillery, where he made a good record. His battery was sent that year to Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, and then to Fortress Monroe in Virginia. In 1829 he was promoted to be sergeant-major, the highest grade he could reach.

The death of Mrs. Allan in February of that year brought him again to Richmond where he tried with partial success for a reconciliation with Mr. Allan. He was released from the army, April 15, 1829, and Allan seems to have tried next to have him appointed at West Point. Meantime Poe went to Baltimore where he lived at the house of his father's sister, Mrs. Maria Clemm. He continued to write, and published in this year *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems*. Again in Richmond for a short time, he had a violent quarrel with Allan and left him to enter West Point, July 1, 1830. After the death of the first Mrs. Allan, Poe's chances with Allan became less and less. They had never been very compatible and the second Mrs. Allan, married in 1830, was Poe's bitter critic. Because of Poe's unstable temperament there was undoubtedly much to be said on Allan's side as well as his.

Poe found the life at West Point too disciplined and austere. Interested in his writing, he neglected his duties and deliberately acquired demerits. He was court-martialed on the charge of remissness from duty and disobedience, and discharged March, 1831. Henceforth he was disowned by Allan, who died in 1834 without making any provision for Poe.

The rest of his life was a long struggle with poverty and want. He was often in desperate plight. For seventeen years he managed to live by his pen the uncertain, irregular life of a struggling writer, editor, and literary hack. A little later it might have been easier for him with his powers and industry to do well, but his day was not very favorable for the aesthetic life. It is possible, too, that his unstable nature might always have prevented him from keeping positions.

He published a second edition of his poems in New York in 1831, and in 1833 the first real stimulus to a literary career came when his "MS. Found in a Bottle" won a prize of fifty dollars offered by a Baltimore paper for the best prose tale. Some time later (1835) with the assistance of a friend he got an appointment on the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and in 1836 he married his cousin Virginia Clemm, then aged thirteen or fourteen. He lost his position in 1837, but in 1839 he became the editor for a short time of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, published in Philadelphia. His *Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* appeared in 1838, and two volumes of *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* in 1839. In 1841-1842 he was on the staff of *Graham's Magazine*, and later tried unsuccessfully to establish a magazine of his own. A removal to New York followed in 1844, and there he did hack work for N. P. Willis's *New York Evening Mirror*. "The Raven," published in 1845 in the *Mirror*, was a great popular success and won fame for him, but brought him only ten dollars. In 1845-1846 he worked on the *Broadway Journal*, and in these years published *Tales* and *The Raven and Other Poems*.

Poe gained positions easily, at least at first, but his occasional lapses to inebriety made him incapable of work at times and hampered his success. He was never habitually intemperate but was constantly tempted by social usages and was susceptible to the least quantity, even a spoonful, of alcohol. It was hard for him to work steadily although his brilliancy was appreciated by his employers, and his friends sought to do much on his behalf. N. P. Willis said of him that he was industrious, quiet, patient, and gentlemanly. It is certain that he was a very hard worker, writing irregularly but rapidly.

More difficulties were added to his life by the failing health of his wife Virginia. Never very strong, she spent the last six years of her life as an invalid wasting away with tuberculosis. The family moved to Fordham in 1846, and the following year Virginia died. An attractive side of Poe's life is his tender care of her and his devotion to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm, who lived with them and looked after them, and whose practical efforts kept the three together when they were in the greatest straits. Poe's domestic life was exemplary.

After Virginia's death Poe collapsed rapidly. *Eureka*, a *Prose Poem* was published in 1848 and was his last important work. He indulged more and more in intoxicants and had several mistaken love affairs. Among the women with whom he entered into sentimental romantic relations was Sarah Helen Whitman, a poet. Later, when in Richmond, he became engaged to a well-to-do widow, Mrs. Shelton (born Sarah Elmira Royster), whom he had known in his youth. On his way north he lapsed into drinking at Baltimore. He was found there in the street, helpless and insensible, and was taken to a hospital, where he died, October 7, 1849.

Poe summed up his ideals of poetry in "The Poetic Principle," and he illustrated his deductive tendency to create poems such as "The Raven" in the light of such ideals in "The Philosophy of Composition." In a didactic era he regarded poetry as the rhythmical creation of beauty,—goodness and truth being sharply subordinated. All details and imagery must harmonize so as to achieve a unity of effect on the mind of the reader, preferably an effect of melancholy which Poe regarded as "the most legitimate of all the poetic tones." To him the lyric, not over a hundred lines long, was the only true poem. He emphasized music, and hence prosodic technique, as of supreme importance in producing "a suggestive indefiniteness of meaning" and "novel moods of beauty in form, in color, in sound, in sentiment." In prosody Poe was an arch conservative; poetry depends not on accent but on time or "quantity," and he opposed substitutions of feet, contractions, elisions, "harsh consonants," and identical, light, or inexact rhymes. Although he opposed flat didacticism, he saw the essence of poetry as "an elevating excitement of the Soul" and he found beauty in "all noble thoughts—in all unworldly motives—in all holy impulses"; beauty resides in the ideal and "is not afforded the soul by any existing collocation of earth's forms."

Poe left only a small but distinctive body of verse. His poems are not to be read intellectually but for sound and suggestion. They are marked by intensity and by magic of expression. He was much occupied with technique and gained his effects on the borderland of music, without seeking to convey profound ideas. His poetry does not concern itself with patriotic themes or ethical abstractions, and it lacks a real human or a real nature element.

Poe's nearest predecessor in the writing of his type of fiction is Charles Brockden Brown. He was far more of an artist, however, than Brown. He did not create the short story, a relatively new form of art, for it had been developed in Europe; but he did compact it, give it standards of structure for America, and rid it of the sentimental and meditative elements then common in tales. He summed up his ideals of the short story in his review of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*. A story must be short enough to be read at one sitting, so as to gain "the immense force derivable from totality." It should aim at a single and unique effect, all details being excluded which do not further "the one pre-established design." He also emphasized the need for verisimilitude and finality. In practice, his stories, with their carefully established backgrounds, strange heroes, and effects of horror, are a landmark in the development of American fiction. Poe's tales fall into several classes. They may be grouped into analytical tales or tales of ratiocination, such as "The Gold Bug" or "Murders in the Rue Morgue"; tales of mystery and occultism or horror and death, as "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "Ligeia"; pseudo-scientific tales or tales of marvellous adventure, as "MS. Found in a Bottle" or "The Descent into the Maelstrom"; tales of fantasy and extravaganza, such as "Eleanora" or "The Domain of Arnheim"; and tales of humor, such as "The Devil in the Belfry," a class in which Poe is not at his best.

In still a third field, that of American literary criticism, Poe is of importance. He was especially interested in artistic analysis and left a definite body of critical ideas. When others emphasized spontaneity, he viewed and practiced logical concentration as a principle of art and sought to show how he reached his effects by conscious processes. In his own day he was known chiefly as a critic—a critic who sought not to explain or interpret or appreciate but to render sharply-worded judgments. He thought American criticism was led astray by irrelevant patriotic or moralistic opinions, and as a corrective he advocated and practiced "an absolutely independent criticism . . . guiding itself only by the purest rules of Art; analyzing and urging these rules as it applies them; holding itself aloof from all personal bias: acknowledging no fear save that of outraging the right." (These ideals are set forth in his prospectus for *The Penn Magazine*, and they are amplified in his "Exordium.") His criticism is distinctive in its very "particular and methodical application" of his principles of the poem and short story already sketched. Doubtless Poe's quest as a journalist for sensationalism accentuated his rather harsh

doctrine that "in pointing out frankly the errors of a work, we do nearly all that is critically necessary in displaying its merits." In his larger ideas of the function of a critic, the nature of genius and of imagination, and the extent to which poetry may deal with truth, Poe was in debt to Coleridge, as Stovall has shown. Margaret Alterton and Hardin Craig, interesting themselves in his "prose poem," *Eureka*, with its vision of a universe of ordered harmony, believe that in its Newtonian emphasis on natural law and harmony may be found the basis of his theory and practice of composition and his quest of unity and totality of effect in literature.

*The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (17 vols., 1902), edited by James A. Harrison (known as the Virginia Edition) is usually considered the best. It superseded the earlier and faulty edition by N. P. Willis, J. R. Lowell, and R. W. Griswold (4 vols., 1850-56), that by J. H. Ingram (1874-75), and the good but incomplete ten-volume edition by E. C. Stedman and G. E. Woodberry (1894-95, 1914). There are several other, but minor, editions. The *Poems* were edited separately by Andrew Lang in 1892, and by G. E. Woodberry in 1907. The best edition is *The Complete Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, collected and edited by J. H. Whitty, and arranged with memoirs and notes and a bibliography (1911, second edition, 1917). There is also an excellent critical edition (1917) by Killis Campbell, who also edited Poe's short stories (1927). Poe's letters to Sarah Helen Whitman have been edited by J. A. Harrison (1909), the letters to George W. Eveleth, by James Southall Wilson, in *Alumni Bulletin*, University of Virginia, Jan., 1924; *Letters Till Now Unpublished* (in the Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia), by Mary Newton Stanard (1925). The "Poe-Chivers Papers" were edited by G. E. Woodberry, *Century Magazine*, XLIII, Jan.-Feb., 1903.

A factual biography of Poe is James A. Harrison's *Life and Letters of Edgar Allan Poe* (2 vols., 1903). Hervey Allen's *Israelit* (2 vols., 1926, rev., 1934) is a romantic biography which is readable but not wholly firsthand or reliable. He also treated Poe in the *DAB*, XV (1935). Similarly, J. W. Krutch's *Edgar Allan Poe, a Study in Genius* (1926) is not wholly trustworthy because of its slant toward a pathological hypothesis. *Edgar Allan Poe—The Man* (2 vols., 1926), by Mary E. Phillips, though not a finished piece of work, is based on original and valuable research. The best literary biography of Poe is G. E. Woodberry's *Edgar Allan Poe* (2 vols., 1909), which supersedes the author's briefer work of 1885. J. H. Ingram's *Life* (2 vols., 1880), and Una Pope-Hennessy's straightforward biography (1934), both deserve mention. Many magazine articles throw light on special phases of Poe's life.

Critical articles and studies concerning Poe by Killis Campbell are included in *CHAL*, II (1918), and in learned periodicals. He is also the author of *The Mind of Poe* (1933). Other helpful studies are those by Charles F. Richardson, in *American Literature*, 1607-1885, II (1889); L. E. Gates, in *Studies and Appreciations* (1900); W. C. Brownell, in *American Prose Masters* (1909); Arthur Ransome, *Edgar Allan Poe, a Critical Study* (1910); Norman Foerster, in *American Criticism* (1928); Alfred Kreymborg, in *Our Singing Strength* (1929); Margaret Alterton, *Origin of Poe's Critical Theory* (1925); also the introduction to Alterton and Craig's *Poe: Representative Selections* (1935); Gay W. Allen, in *American Prosody* (1935); and Edward Shanks, *Edgar Allan Poe* (1937). G. R. Graham, who knew Poe, offered contemporary criticism in *Graham's Magazine* for Feb., 1854, as did R. W. Griswold, who included a memoir, famous for its unfairness, in his edition of Poe's works mentioned above.

The best bibliographies of Poe may be found in *CHAL*, II (1918), in J. W. Robertson's *A Bibliography of the Writings of Edgar Allan Poe* (2 vols., 1934), and in the Craig-Alterton *Poe*.



## A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

The earliest title of this poem was "Imitation," changed to "To ——" in 1829. The present title was given it in 1839. First published in the 1827 volume, it underwent modifications in 1831 and 1849. At the time of his death, Poe was said to have been contemplating still further changes (Whitty, *Complete Poems*, viii-ix). The autobiographical element in the earlier texts was lessened in the later ones.

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow—  
You are not wrong who deem  
That my days have been a dream,  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less *gone*?  
*All* that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream

10

I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand—  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep—while I weep!  
O God! can I not grasp  
Them with a tighter clasp?  
O God! can I not save  
*One* from the pitiless wave?  
*Is all* that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream?

1827, 1829, 1849

1827

## Song from AL AARAAF

"SPIRIT! that dwellest where,  
In the deep sky,  
The terrible and fair,  
In beauty vie!  
Beyond the line of blue—  
The boundary of the star  
Which turneth at the view  
Of thy barrier and thy bar—  
Of the barrier overgone  
By the comets who were cast  
From their pride and from their throne,  
To be drudges till the last—

10

To be carriers of fire  
(The red fire of their heart)  
With speed that may not tire  
And with pain that shall not part—  
Who livest—that we know—  
In Eternity—we feel—  
But the shadow of whose brow  
What spirit shall reveal? 20  
Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,  
Thy messenger, hath known,  
Have dream'd for thy Infinity  
A model of their own—  
Thy will is done, oh, God!  
The star hath ridden high  
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode  
Beneath thy burning eye,  
And here, in thought, to thee—  
In thought that can alone 30  
Ascend thy empire and so be  
A partner of thy throne—  
By winged Fantasy,  
My embassy is given,  
Till secrecy shall knowledge be  
In the environs of Heaven "

1827-1829

1829

## SONNET—TO SCIENCE

Though it was of later composition, Poe always printed this sonnet just before *Al Aaraaf*, to which it served as an introduction. The underlying idea, that science curbs imaginative flights and so ends poetry, was much discussed in Poe's day. Compare Keats's *Lamia*, II, 229-38.

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!  
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes,  
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,  
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?  
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,  
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering  
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,  
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?  
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?  
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood? 10  
To seek a shelter in some happier star?  
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,  
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me  
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829

## TO HELEN

Some think this Poe's best poem. If his statement is to be believed, it commemorates his devotion to a lady kind to him in his boyhood, Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard of Richmond, who died in 1824. A poem in a dream mood, it is marked by grace and beauty of sound and suggestion, created in a minimum of words. The type of beauty suggested for the heroine seems to shift from that which soothes the "way-worn wanderer," in the first stanza, to a classic type in the second, and to a type associated with Psyche (the soul) in the last.

HELEN, thy beauty is to me  
Like those Niçean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece  
And the grandeur that was Rome

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy Land!

1831

## THE CITY IN THE SEA

The original title was "The Doomed City," changed to "The City of Sin" in 1836 and to the present title in 1845. Poe's phantom city in its stagnant sea is a pagan city. Blending with the poet's scriptural memories of Babylon, and perhaps a beautiful Gomorrah, doomed also, was the memory of a city engulfed by water (see L. Pound, *American Literature*, March, 1934). There is a vast lore of sunken cities, ancient and modern. In *American Literature*, March, 1936, the suggestion was made that Tyre (Ezekiel 26-28), often referred to from the pulpit as "the city in the sea," may have been in Poe's mind.

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne  
In a strange city lying alone  
Far down within the dim West,  
Where the good and the bad and the worst  
and the best  
Have gone to their eternal rest.

There shrines and palaces and towers  
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)  
Resemble nothing that is ours.  
Around, by lifting winds forgot,  
Resignedly beneath the sky  
The melancholy waters lie.

10

No rays from the holy heaven come down  
On the long night-time of that town;  
But light from out the lurid sea  
Streams up the turrets silently,  
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—  
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,  
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,  
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers  
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,  
Up many and many a marvelous shrine  
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine  
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

20

Resignedly beneath the sky  
The melancholy waters lie.  
So blend the turrets and shadows there  
That all seem pendulous in air,  
While from a proud tower in the town  
Death looks giganatically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves  
Yawn level with the luminous waves;  
But not the riches there that lie  
In each idol's diamond eye,—  
Not the gayly-jeweled dead,  
Tempt the waters from their bed,  
For no ripples curl, alas,  
Along that wilderness of glass,  
No swellings tell that winds may be  
Upon some far-off happier sea,  
No heavings hint that winds have been  
On seas less hideously serene!

30

40

But lo, a stir is in the air!  
The wave—there is a movement there!  
As if the towers had thrust aside,  
In slightly sinking, the dull tide,  
As if their tops had feebly given  
A void within the filmy Heaven!  
The waves have now a redder glow,  
The hours are breathing faint and low;  
And when, amid no earthly moans,  
Down, down that town shall settle hence,  
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,  
Shall do it reverence.

50

1831

## THE SLEEPER

First published under the title "Irene" Striking are its lulling cadences and the magic of its moonlit midnight Poe liked it among the best of his poems He said in a letter cited in Ingram's *Life*, "Your appreciation of 'The Sleeper' delights me In the higher qualities of poetry it is better than 'The Raven', but there is not one man in a million who could be brought to agree with me in this opinion 'The Raven,' of course, is far better as a work of art, but in the true basis of all art, 'The Sleeper' is the superior I wrote the latter when quite a boy"

At midnight, in the month of June,  
I stand beneath the mystic moon  
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,  
Exhales from out her golden rim,  
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,  
Upon the quiet mountain-top,  
Steals drowsily and musically  
Into the universal valley  
The rosemary nods upon the grave,  
The lily lolls upon the wave, 10  
Wrapping the fog about its breast,  
The ruin molders into rest,  
Looking like Lethe, seal the lake  
A conscious slumber seems to take,  
And would not, for the world, awake.  
All beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies  
Irene, with her destinies!

O lady bright! can it be right,  
This window open to the night?  
The wanton airs, from the tree-top, 20  
Laughingly through the lattice drop,  
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,  
Flit through thy chamber in and out,  
And wave the curtain canopy  
So fitfully, so fearfully,  
Above the closed and fringed lid  
'Neath which thy slumbering soul lies  
hid,  
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,  
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall.  
O lady dear, hast thou no fear? 30  
Why and what art thou dreaming here?  
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,  
A wonder to these garden trees!  
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!  
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,  
And thus all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,  
Which is enduring, so be deep!  
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!  
This chamber changed for one more holy, 40  
This bed for one more melancholy,  
I pray to God that she may lie  
Forever with unopened eye,  
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by.

My love, she sleeps Oh, may her sleep,  
As it is lasting, so be deep!  
Soft may the worms about her creep!  
Far in the forest, dim and old,  
For her may some tall vault unfold—  
Some vault that oft hath flung its black 50  
And winged panels fluttering back,  
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls  
Of her grand family funerals—  
Some sepulcher, remote, alone,  
Against whose portal she hath thrown,  
In childhood many an idle stone—  
Some tomb from out whose sounding door  
She ne'er shall force an echo more,  
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin,  
It was the dead who groaned within! 60

1831

## LENORE

This poem in semi-dramatic form underwent revisions through many stages, from the short ballad stanzas of the original to the long lines with internal rhymes introduced in 1845 The name Lenore, liked by Poe for its sound, was perhaps suggested to him by Bürger's eighteenth-century German ballad of the supernatural of that name When reviewing a volume of poems in 1844, Poe wrote "Her tone is not so much the tone of passion, as of a gentle and melancholy regret, interwoven with a pleasant sense of the natural loveliness surrounding the lost in the tomb, and a memory of her beauty while alive—Elegiac poems should either assume this character, or dwell purely on the beauty (moral or physical) of the departed, or better still, utter the note of triumph I have endeavored to carry out this idea in some verses which I have called 'Lenore'"

Ah, broken is the golden bowl!—the spirit  
flown forever!  
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the  
Stygian river;

1 Ecclesiastes 12 6

And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear<sup>2</sup>—  
 weep now or never more!  
 Seel on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy  
 love, Lenore!  
 Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral  
 song be sung!—  
 An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever  
 died so young—  
 A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she  
 died so young

"Wretches!"<sup>1</sup> ye loved her for her wealth and  
 hated her for her pride,  
 And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed  
 her—that she died!  
 How *shall* the ritual, then, be read<sup>2</sup>—the  
 requiem how be sung 10  
 By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours,  
 the slanderous tongue  
 That did to death the innocence that died, and  
 died so young?"

*Peccavimus*,<sup>2</sup> yet rave not thus! but let a Sab-  
 bath song  
 Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel  
 no wrong!  
 The sweet Lenore hath gone before, with  
 Hope, that flew beside,  
 Leaving thee wild for the dear child that  
 should have been thy bride—  
 For her, the fair and debonaire, that now so  
 lowly lies,  
 The life upon her yellow hair, but not within  
 her eyes—  
 The life still there upon her hair, the death  
 upon her eyes

"Avaunt!—avaunt! to fiends from fiends the  
 indignant ghost is riven— 20  
 From Hell unto a high estate within the ut-  
 most Heaven—  
 From moan and groan to a golden throne  
 beside the King of Heaven.—  
 Let *no* bell toll, then, lest her soul, amid its  
 hallowed mirth,  
 Should catch the note as it doth float up from  
 the damned Earth!

<sup>1</sup> The false friends of Lenore, who speak the first and third stanzas. The second and fourth stanzas are spoken by the bereaved lover. <sup>2</sup> "We have sinned," a widely used phrase of confession

And I—tonight my heart is light—no dirge  
 will I upraise,  
 But waft the angel on her flight with a Paean  
 of old days!"

1831

## ISRAFEL

This lyric is unusual for Poe. It expresses rejoicing or exaltation, embodied in verse of upspringing lightness. Of interest are the ideas of the poet that it conveys. The ideal poet writes, from his heart, impassioned melodious verse, and he is endowed with superior wisdom and fervor. At the end Poe recognizes regretfully how his environment influences or limits the poet.

And the angel Israfil, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures —KORAN<sup>1</sup>

IN Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
 "Whose heart-strings are a lute";<sup>2</sup>  
 None sing so wildly well  
 As the angel Israfil,  
 And the giddy stars (so legends tell)  
 Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
 Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
 In her highest noon,  
 The enamored moon 10  
 Blushes with love,  
 While, to listen, the red levin  
 (With the rapid Pleiads, even,  
 Which were seven)  
 Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir  
 And the other listening things)  
 That Israfil's fire  
 Is owing to that lyre  
 By which he sits and sings— 20  
 The trembling living wire  
 Of those unusual strings.

<sup>1</sup> Poe's motto is based upon a passage in Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" to his translation of the Koran. It is not in the Koran itself. Poe varied the motto from edition to edition of his poems. <sup>2</sup> This quotation, according to Professor Willis Campbell, is based upon a passage in *Le Refus*, by the French lyric poet Béranger.

But the skies that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty,  
Where Love's a grown-up God,  
Where the Hours<sup>1</sup> glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,  
Israfel, who despisest 30  
An unpassioned song,  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard, because the wisest!  
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit—  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute—  
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine, but this 40  
Is a world of sweets and sour,  
Our flowers are merely—flowers,  
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours

If I could dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing so wildly well  
A mortal melody,  
While a bolder note than thus might  
swell 50  
From my lyre within the sky

1831

### TO ONE IN PARADISE

First printed in *Godey's Lady's Book*, January, 1834, as a part of Poe's story "The Visionary," later renamed "The Assigination"

Thou wast all that to me, love,  
For which my soul did pine—  
A green isle in the sea, love,  
A fountain and a shrine,  
All wreathed with fairy fruits and  
flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

<sup>1</sup> The hours are beautiful black-eyed nymphs that inhabit the paradise of the Mohammedans

Ah, dream too bright to last!  
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise  
But to be overcast!  
A voice from out the Future cries, 10  
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past  
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me  
The light of Life is o'er!  
No more—no more—no more—  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,  
Or the stricken eagle soar! 20

And all my days are trances,  
And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy gray eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams—  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams 1834

### THE CONQUEROR WORM

Published in *Graham's Magazine*, January, 1843  
It was later (1845) incorporated in the short story "Ligeia" The poem is a miniature allegory of human life C W Kent (*Poems by Poe*) noted that its five stanzas correspond to the five acts of a tragedy

Lo! 'tis a gala night  
Within the lonesome latter years.  
An angel throng, bewinged, betight  
In veils, and drowned in tears,  
Sit in a theater to see  
A play of hopes and fears,  
While the orchestra breathes fitfully  
The music of the spheres

Mimes, in the form of God on high,  
Mutter and mumble low, 10  
And hither and thither fly—  
Mere puppets they, who come and go  
At bidding of vast formless things  
That shift the scenery to and fro,  
Flapping from out their Condor wings  
Invisible Wo.

That motley drama—oh, be sure  
 It shall not be forgot!  
 With its Phantom chased for evermore  
 By a crowd that seize it not,  
 Through a circle that ever returneth in  
 To the self-same spot,  
 And much of Madness, and more of Sin,  
 And Horror the soul of the plot

But see amid the mimic rout  
 A crawling shape intrude!  
 A blood-red thing that writhes from out  
 The scenic solitude!  
 It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs  
 The mimes become its food,  
 And seraphs sob at vermin fangs  
 In human gore imbued

Out—out are the lights—out all  
 And, over each quivering form,  
 The curtain, a funeral pall,  
 Comes down with the rush of a storm,  
 While the angels, all pallid and wan,  
 Uprising, unveiling, affirm  
 That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"  
 And its hero, the Conqueror Worm

40

1843

## DREAM-LAND

In theme this poem is related to Poe's earlier  
 "Spirits of the Dead" and "Fairy-Land" The  
 poet's manner in "The Raven" and "Ulalume"  
 is foreshadowed in this piece, especially his  
 abundant use of repetition

By a route obscure and lonely,  
 Haunted by ill angels only,  
 Where an Eidolon,<sup>1</sup> named NIGHT,  
 On a black throne reigns upright,  
 I have reached these lands but newly  
 From an ultimate dim Thule<sup>2</sup>—  
 From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,  
 Out of SPACE—out of TIME

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,  
 And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,

<sup>1</sup> A phantom or image. Night seems here to be a symbol of death, as in "The Raven" (line 47).  
<sup>2</sup> This mythical land was supposed by the ancients to be the most northerly part of Europe

With forms that no man can discover  
 For the tears that drip all over,  
 Mountains toppling evermore  
 Into seas without a shore;  
 Seas that restlessly aspire,  
 Surging, unto skies of fire,  
 Lakes that endlessly outspread  
 Their lone waters, lone and dead,—  
 Their still waters, still and chilly  
 With the snows of the lolling lily

11

20

By the lakes that thus outspread  
 Their lone waters, lone and dead,—  
 Their sad waters, sad and chilly  
 With the snows of the lolling lily,—  
 By the mountains—near the river  
 Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—  
 By the grey woods,—by the swamp  
 Where the toad and the newt encamp,—  
 By the dismal tarns and pools  
 Where dwell the Ghouls,—  
 By each spot the most unholy—  
 In each nook most melancholy,—  
 There the traveller meets, aghast,  
 Shetted Memories of the Past—  
 Shrouded forms that start and sigh  
 As they pass the wanderer by—  
 White-robed forms of friends long given,  
 In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven

30

For the heart whose woes are legion  
 'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—  
 For the spirit that walks in shadow  
 'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!  
 But the traveller, travelling through it,  
 May not—dare not openly view it,  
 Never its mysteries are exposed  
 To the weak human eye unclosed,  
 So wills its King, who hath forbid  
 The uplifting of the fringed lid,  
 And thus the sad Soul that here passes  
 Beholds it but through darkened glasses

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By a route obscure and lonely,  
 Haunted by ill angels only,  
 Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
 On a black throne reigns upright,  
 I have wandered home but newly  
 From this ultimate dim Thule.

## THE RAVEN

The best known of Poe's poems and that upon which his fame most securely rests. Originally published in the New York *Evening Mirror*, January 29, 1845, it underwent many though not extensive revisions. Its subject is a favorite with Poe, the grief of a bereaved lover for his lost love. Poe had reviewed Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*, which began to appear in 1841, and perhaps derived from it his raven, through which the speaker receives the same answer to his questions concerning his despairing mood, hope of reunion, and of forgetfulness. Poe had also reviewed Mrs. Browning's *Lady Geraldine's Courtship* (1844), and there are indebtednesses of meter and expression to the Southern poet, T. H. Chivers. In "The Philosophy of Composition" Poe professes to tell exactly how "The Raven" was written, demonstrating the steps as in a mathematical problem. The account may not be accepted literally, but surely there is much truth in it. A great deal of critical thinking, analysis, and arrangement went into the composition of the poem. The technical procedure set forth is much the same as that in his tales. Rossetti said that his "The Blessed Damozel" was inspired by "The Raven." "I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." "The Raven" was reproduced widely, and translated into foreign languages.

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—  
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,  
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.  
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow  
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

10

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—  
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before,  
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating  
"Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,  
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door  
Thus it is and nothing more"

Presently my soul grew stronger, hesitating then no longer,  
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore: 20  
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,  
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,  
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door—  
Darkness there and nothing more

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,  
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before  
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,  
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"  
Thus I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"  
Merely this and nothing more 30

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.  
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;  
Let me see, then, what thetreat is, and this mystery explore;  
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore—  
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with  
 many a flirt and flutter,  
 In there stepped a stately Raven of the  
 saintly days of yore;  
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute  
 stopped or stayed he,  
 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above  
 my chamber door,  
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my  
 chamber door—  
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy  
 into smiling  
 By the grave and stern decorum of the coun-  
 tenance it wore,—  
 "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven,  
 thou," I said, "art sure no craven,  
 Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering  
 from the Nightly shore—  
 Tell me what thy lordly name is on the  
 Night's Plutonian shore!"  
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore "

Much I marveled thus ungainly fowl to hear  
 discourse so plainly,  
 Though its answer little meaning—little rele-  
 vancy bore,  
 For we cannot help agreeing that no living  
 human being  
 Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above  
 his chamber door,  
 Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above  
 his chamber door,  
 With such name as "Nevermore "

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid  
 bust, spoke only  
 That one word, as if his soul in that one word  
 he did outpour,  
 Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather  
 then he fluttered,  
 Till I scarcely more than muttered,—  
 "Other friends have flown before,  
 On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes  
 have flown before."  
 Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so  
 aptly spoken,  
 "Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only  
 stock and store,

Caught from some unhappy master whom  
 unmerciful Disaster  
 Followed fast and followed faster till his  
 songs one burden bore—  
 Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy  
 burden bore  
 Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into  
 smiling,  
 Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front  
 of bird and bust and door;  
 Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook my-  
 self to linking  
 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous  
 bird of yore,  
 What this grim, unganly, ghastly, gaunt, and  
 ominous bird of yore  
 Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable  
 expressing  
 To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into  
 my bosom's core,  
 Thus and more I sat divining, with my head  
 at ease reclining  
 On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-  
 light gloated o'er,  
 But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-  
 light gloating o'er  
*She* shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, per-  
 fumed from an unseen censer  
 Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled  
 on the tufted floor.  
 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee  
 —by these angels he hath sent thee  
 Respite—respite and nepenthe<sup>1</sup> from thy  
 memories of Lenore!  
 Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and for-  
 get this lost Lenore!"  
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet  
 still, if bird or devil!  
 Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest  
 tossed thee here ashore,  
 Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert  
 land enchanted—

<sup>1</sup> oblivion of grief



On this home by Horror haunted—tell me  
truly, I implore.

Is there—<sup>is</sup> there balm in Gilead?—tell me—  
tell me, I implore!

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore" 90

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet  
still, if bird or devil!"

By that Heaven that bends above us, by that  
God we both adore,

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within  
the distant Aidenn,<sup>1</sup>

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the  
angels name Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the  
angels name Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore"

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or  
fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting.

"Get thee back into the tempest and the  
Night's Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie  
thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken quit the bust  
above my door! 100

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take  
thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore"

And the Raven, never flitting, *still* is sitting,  
*still* is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my  
chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's  
that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws  
his shadow on the floor:

And my soul from out that shadow that lies  
floating on the floor:

Shall be lifted—nevermore!

1845

### ULALUME

Composed not long after the death of Poe's  
wife It used to be termed by critics "semi-  
delirious," in its strange geography and its strange  
content. The poem is indefinite; but it should be

<sup>1</sup> variant of Eden

recalled that Poe held indefiniteness, the giving of  
pleasure, and beauty, to be the essentials of poetry  
The speaker has much in common with the hero  
of "The Raven," who might take such a journey,  
in imagination, for his lost Lenore, a journey end-  
ing at the door of a tomb The poet communes  
with his soul, though autobiographical interpre-  
tation is not to be insisted upon S Foster Damon  
has pointed out (*T H Chivers*, 214-15) indebted-  
ness to Chivers's *Nacoochee* There is a good dis-  
cussion of the poem and its problems in the Craig-  
Alterton *Poe*, cxxi-cxxv Whitty (*Complete Poems*,  
247) states that Poe, on transcribing "Ulalume"  
for a friend, wrote to her "I would endeavor to  
explain to you what I really meant—or what I  
fancied I meant by the poem, if it were not that I  
remembered Dr Johnson's bitter and rather just  
remark about the folly of explaining what, if worth  
explanation, would explain itself He has a happy  
witticism, too, about some book which he calls  
'as obscure as a explanatory note'"

THE skies they were ashen and sober;  
The leaves they were crisped and sere,  
The leaves they were withering and sere,  
It was night in the lonesome October  
Of my most immemorial year,  
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,<sup>1</sup>  
In the misty mid region of Weir  
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir

Here once, through an alley Titanic 10  
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—  
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul  
These were days when my heart was volcanic  
As the scoriae rivers that roll,  
As the lavas that restlessly roll  
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
In the ultimate climes of the Pole,  
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek  
In the realms of the Boreal Pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober, 20  
But our thoughts they were palsied and  
sere,  
Our memories were treacherous and sere,  
For we knew not the month was October,  
And we marked not the night of the year,  
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)

<sup>1</sup> Auber, Weir, and Yaanek are not definite geo-  
graphical names but are examples of Poe's coinage of  
names for romantic suggestion.

We noted not the dim lake of Auber  
(Though once we had journeyed down  
here),

Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir

And now, as the night was senescent 30  
And star-dials pointed to morn,  
As the star-dials hunted of morn,  
At the end of our path a liquescent  
And nebulous lustre was born,  
Out of which a miraculous crescent  
Arose, with a duplicate horn,  
Astarte's bediamonded crescent  
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian  
She rolls through an ether of sighs, 40  
She revels in a region of sighs  
She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,  
And has come past the stars of the Lion  
To point us the path to the skies,  
To the Lethæan peace of the skies  
Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
To shine on us with her bright eyes  
Come up through the lair of the Lion,  
With love in her luminous eyes " 50

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,  
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,  
Her pallor I strangely mistrust  
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!  
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must "  
In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
Wings till they trailed in the dust,  
In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
Plumes till they trailed in the dust, 60  
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming  
Let us on by this tremulous light!  
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!  
Its sibyllic splendor is beaming  
With hope and in beauty tonight  
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!  
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
And be sure it will lead us aright.  
We safely may trust to a gleaming  
That cannot but guide us aright, 70  
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the  
night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
And tempted her out of her gloom,  
And conquered her scruples and gloom,  
And we passed to the end of the vista,  
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,  
By the door of a legended tomb,  
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,  
On the door of this legended tomb?"  
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume— 80  
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
As the leaves that were crisped and sere,  
As the leaves that were withering and sere,  
And I cried—"It was surely October  
On this very night of last year  
That I journeyed—I journeyed down  
here!—  
That I brought a dread burden down  
here—  
On this night of all nights in the year,  
Ah, what demon has tempted me here? 90  
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,  
This misty mid region of Weir  
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir

1847

## THE BELLS

This poem is said to have grown out of a suggestion made to the author by Mrs L. M. Shew in the summer of 1848. The first draft consisted of but eighteen lines. In second and third drafts the poem grew in length, and finally in a fourth revision took the form given here. It has had great praise as one of the finest examples of onomatopoeia in the language. It is, says Professor Harrison, "the most perfect imitation in word, sound, and rhythm, in suggestion, in exquisite mimicry, of its theme ever written."

1

HEAR the sledges with the bells,  
Silver bells!  
What a world of merriment their melody  
foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars, that oversprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight;

Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme. 10  
 To the tunnnabulation that so musically  
       wells  
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
       Bells, bells, bells—  
 From the jingling and the tinkling of the  
       bells.

## II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,  
       Golden bells!  
 What a world of happiness their harmony  
       foretells!  
 Through the balmy air of night  
 How they ring out their delight!  
       From the molten-golden notes, 20  
       And all in tune,  
       What a liquid ditty floats  
 To the turtle-dove that listens, while she  
       gloats  
       On the moon!  
       Oh, from out the sounding cells,  
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!  
       How it swells!  
       How it dwells  
       On the Future! how it tells  
       Of the rapture that impels 30  
 To the swinging and the ringing  
       Of the bells, bells, bells,  
       Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
       Bells, bells, bells—  
 To the rhyming and the churning of the  
       bells!

## III

Hear the loud alarm bells,  
       Brazen bells!  
 What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency  
       tells!  
 In the startled ear of night  
 How they scream out their affright! 40  
       Too much horrified to speak,  
       They can only shriek, shriek,  
       Out of tune,  
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the  
       fire,  
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and  
       frantic fire,  
       Leaping higher, higher, higher,  
       With a desperate desire,

And a resolute endeavor  
 Now—now to sit or never,  
 By the side of the pale-faced moon. 50  
       Oh, the bells, bells, bells!  
       What a tale their terror tells  
       Of Despair!  
 How they clang, and clash, and roar!  
 What a horror they outpour  
 On the bosom of the palpitating air!  
       Yet the ear it fully knows,  
       By the twanging  
       And the clanging,  
       How the danger ebbs and flows; 60  
 Yet the ear distinctly tells,  
       In the jangling  
       And the wrangling,  
 How the danger sinks and swells,  
 By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of  
       the bells,  
       Of the bells,  
       Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
       Bells, bells, bells—  
 In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

## IV

Hear the tolling of the bells, 70  
       Iron bells!  
 What a world of solemn thought their mon-  
       ody compels!  
 In the silence of the night  
 How we shiver with affright  
 At the melancholy menace of their tone!  
 For every sound that floats  
 From the rust within their throats  
       Is a groan  
 And the people—ah, the people,  
 They that dwell up in the steeple, 80  
       All alone,  
 And who tolling, tolling, tolling  
       In that muffled monotone,  
 Feel a glory in so rolling  
 On the human heart a stone—  
 They are neither man nor woman,  
 They are neither brute nor human,  
       They are Ghouls—  
 And their king it is who tolls,  
       And he rolls, rolls, rolls, 90  
       Rolls  
 A psan from the bells,  
 And his merry bosom swells  
 With the psan of the bells,

And he dances, and he yells:  
 Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
     To the pæan of the bells,  
     Of the bells  
 Keeping time, time, time,      100  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
     To the throbbing of the bells,  
     Of the bells, bells, bells—  
     To the sobbing of the bells,  
 Keeping time, time, time,  
 As he knells, knells, knells,  
 In a happy Runic rhyme,  
     To the rolling of the bells,  
     Of the bells, bells, bells—  
     To the tolling of the bells,      110  
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
     Bells, bells, bells—  
 To the moaning and the groaning of the  
     bells  
     1849

## ELDORADO

"Poe writes of the search for the golden land as the quest of human happiness in which man never tires 'Eldorado' is simple and beautiful, a noble expression of the ideal as Poe had sought it, and as all men, to some extent at least, also seek it" (Alterton and Craig, *Poe*, 507)

GAYLY bedight,  
 A gallant knight,  
 In sunshine and in shadow,  
 Had journeyed long,  
 Singing a song,  
 In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,  
 Thus knight so bold,  
 And o'er his heart a shadow  
 Fell as he found  
 No spot of ground      10  
 That looked like Eldorado

And, as his strength  
 Failed him at length,  
 He met a pilgrim shadow—  
 "Shadow," said he,  
 "Where can it be,  
 This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains  
 Of the Moon,      20  
 Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
 Rude, boldly ride,"  
 The shade replied,  
 "If you seek for Eldorado!"

1849

## ANNABEL LEE

This poem is commonly believed to have been written in memory of Poe's wife Virginia. However, to quote Alterton and Craig (*Poe*, 509), "A number of different ladies have been put forward as being inspiration for 'Annabel Lee.' It really does not matter, for Poe would not be the poet he is if it did. The poem is expressive of grief at bereavement as that grief may be sublimated by the recollection of true love and unforgettable beauty."

It was many and many a year ago,  
 In a kingdom by the sea,  
 That a maiden there lived, whom you may  
     know  
 By the name of Annabel Lee;—  
 And thus maiden she lived with no other  
     thought  
 Than to love, and be loved by me.

She was a child and I was a child,  
 In this kingdom by the sea;  
 But we loved with a love that was more than  
     love,  
 I and my Annabel Lee—      10  
 With a love that the winged seraphs of  
     heaven  
 Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
 In this kingdom by the sea,  
 A wind blew out of a cloud by night  
 Chilling my Annabel Lee;  
 So that her highborn kinsmen came  
 And bore her away from me,  
 To shut her up in a sepulcher  
 In this kingdom by the sea.      20

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
 Went envying her and me,  
 Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,  
 In this kingdom by the sea)  
 That the wind came out of the cloud, chilling  
 And killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
 Of those who were older than we,  
 Of many far wiser than we;  
 And neither the angels in Heaven above, 30  
 Nor the demons down under the sea,  
 Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:  
 For the moon never beams without bringing  
 me dreams  
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee,

And the stars never rise but I feel the bright  
 eyes  
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee,  
 And so, all the night-ide, I lie down by the  
 side  
 Of my darling—my darling—my life and  
 my bride,  
 In her sepulcher there by the sea, 40  
 In her tomb by the side of the sea.

1849

### THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

This story has been variously characterized as a "prose poem," "study in monotone," and "prose lyric of fear." Poe's "House," stands for an ancient degenerating family and its old decaying family seat, both approaching dissolution. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* preceded Poe's story and Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* followed it in giving the locale the prominence of 10 the characters, even in the title. An atmosphere of desolation and disintegration is established at the opening, and maintained till the final effect of total collapse, toward which all the strands of the story converge. In Roderick Usher, the neuropath of impotent will, reserved for a horrible experience, is illustrated a frequent type of hero in Poe's tales.

Son cœur est un luth suspendu,  
 Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.<sup>1</sup>

Stranger

DURING the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know 30 not how it was, but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable, for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or ter-

<sup>1</sup> "His heart is a suspended lute, as soon as it is touched it resounds." Cf. "Israfel," line 2.

rrible I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous 10 dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought, which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble, nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded 20 upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion that while, beyond doubt, there are combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression, and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I

now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation, and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch, in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with a very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had at length

so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity—an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn, a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen, and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing

observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me in silence through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the *studio* of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceiling, the somber tapestries of the walls, the ebony blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy,—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this, I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around, the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé*<sup>1</sup> man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down, and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion, an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison, lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve, a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely-molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy, hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity,—these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency, and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar

<sup>1</sup> "bored"

physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation, that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the ir-  
claimable eater of opium, during the periods  
of his most intense excitement

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered at some length into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately  
added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me, although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses, the most insipid food was alone endurable, he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive, his  
eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable  
agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect,—in terror. In this unnerved, in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular

feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence for many years he had never ventured forth, in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated,—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit; an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had at length brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin,—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him, the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother, but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed;



but, on the closing-in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain,—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was 10 unmentioned by either Usher or myself, and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together, or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from 20 which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupa- 30 tions, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideal-ity threw a sulphureous luster over all. His long, improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I 40 shuddered knowing not why,—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the cir- 50 cumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypo-

chondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture 10 presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light, was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled 20 throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his *unpromptus* could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rimed verbal im- 30 provisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace,"<sup>1</sup> ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

<sup>1</sup> "By 'The Haunted Palace,'" Poe said to Griswold, "I mean to imply a mind haunted by phantoms—a disordered brain."

## I

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace—  
Radiant palace—reared its head.  
In the monarch Thought's dominion,  
It stood there,  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair.

## II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow  
(This—all this—was in the olden  
Time long ago),  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A wingèd odor went away

## III

Wanderers in that happy valley  
Through two luminous windows saw  
Spirits moving musically  
To a lute's well-tuned law,  
Round about a throne, where sitting,  
Porphyrogene,<sup>1</sup>  
In state his glory well befitting,  
The ruler of the realm was seen

## IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing,  
flowing,  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

## V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate;  
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)  
And, round about his home, the glory  
That blushed and bloomed  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.

## VI

And travelers now within that valley  
Through the red-litten windows see

<sup>1</sup> a name which means "born to the purple"

Vast forms that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody;  
While, like a ghastly rapid river,  
Through the pale door,  
A hideous throng rush out forever,  
And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention, not so much on account of its novelty (for other men<sup>1</sup> have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentence of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent of the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentence had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones,—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around, above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentence—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him,—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which for years had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the Vervet and Chartreuse of Gresset, the Belphegor of Machiavelli, the

<sup>1</sup> Watson, Dr Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Llandaff—See "Chemical Essays," vol v [Poe's note]

Heaven and Hell of Swedenborg; the Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klumm by Holberg; the Chiromancy of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum*, by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne, and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic,—the manual of a forgotten church,—the *Vigilia Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesie Maguntina*.<sup>1</sup>

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of

admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention, and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead, for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all malades of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue, but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more, and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme

<sup>1</sup> "The Watchers of the Dead according to the Choir of the Church of Mayence"

terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room,—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into monon by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame, and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition to which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase

arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes,—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence,—“you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall.” Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity, for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind, and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the lifelike velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this, yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you

shall listen,—and so we will pass away this terrible night together.”

The antique volume which I had taken up was the “*Mad Trist*”<sup>1</sup> of Sir Launcelot Canning, but I had called it a favorite of Usher’s more in sad jest than in earnest, for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual idealism of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand, and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild, overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the *Trist*, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

“And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and malicious turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the planks of the door for his gauntleted hand, and now, pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarmed and reverberated throughout the forest.”

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused, for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been in its exact

<sup>1</sup> The names both of the volume and the author were apparently invented by Poe

similarity of character the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention, for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story —

“But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit, but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sat in guard before a palace of gold with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten —

*Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin,  
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win*

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard.”

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement, for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound,—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon’s unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question, although, assuredly, a strange alteration had

during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast, yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eyes as I caught a  
10 glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea, for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded—

"And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which  
20 was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valourously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall, which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of  
30 silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet, but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his  
40 shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person, a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and have heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it, yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I  
50 am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! We

*have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I *dared* not speak! And now—tonight—Ethereal—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beaming of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher! There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber and from that mansion  
40 I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued, for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this

fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long, tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "*House of Usher*."

1839 10

### A. DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTRÖM

This tale of a Norwegian fisherman caught in a gigantic whirlpool exemplifies Poe's scientific or pseudo-scientific narratives of marvellous adventure. Though in his poetry he professed to care little for it, he had a genuine interest in science. Unlike most of his stories, the "*Descent*" does not end tragically. Poe had never been in the region he describes, but his vigorous imagination makes the scene on the Norwegian coast seem authentic. There is realism of details and the descriptions are powerful and vivid.

The ways of God in Nature, as in Providence, are not as *our* ways, nor are the models that we frame any way commensurate to the vastness, profundity, and unsearchableness of His works, which have a depth in them greater than the well of *Democritus*.

JOSEPH GLANVILLE

We had now reached the summit of the loftest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too much exhausted to speak.

"Not long ago," said he at length, "and I could have guided you on this route as well as the youngest of my sons, but, about three years past, there happened to me an event such as never happened before to mortal man—or at least such as no man ever survived to tell of—and the six hours of deadly terror which I then endured have broken me up body and soul. You suppose me a *very* old man—but I am not. It took less than a single day to change these hairs from a jetty black to white, to weaken my limbs, and to unstring my nerves, so that I tremble at the least exertion, and am frightened at a shadow. Do you know I can scarcely look over this little cliff without getting giddy?"

The "little cliff," upon whose edge he had so carelessly thrown himself down to rest that the weightier portion of his body hung over it, while he was only kept from falling by the tenure of his elbow on its extreme and slippery edge—this "little cliff" arose, a sheer unobstructed precipice of black shining rock, some fifteen or sixteen hundred feet from the world of crags beneath us. Nothing would have tempted me to within half a dozen yards of its brink. In truth so deeply was I excited by the perilous position of my companion, that I fell at full length upon the ground, clung to the shrubs around me, and dared not even glance upward at the sky—while I struggled in vain to divest myself of the idea that the very foundations of the mountain were in danger from the fury of the winds. It was long before I could reason myself into sufficient courage to sit up and look out into the distance.

"You must get over these fancies," said the guide, "for I have brought you here that you might have the best possible view of the scene of that event I mentioned—and to tell you the whole story with the spot just under your eye.

"We are now," he continued, in that particularizing manner which distinguished him—"we are now close upon the Norwegian coast—in the sixty-eighth degree of latitude—in the great province of Nordland—and in the dreary district of Lofoden. The mountain upon whose top we sit is Helseggen, the Cloudy. Now raise yourself up a little higher—hold on to the grass if you feel giddy—so—and look out, beyond the belt of vapor beneath us, into the sea."

I looked dizzily, and beheld a wide expanse of ocean, whose waters wore so inky a hue as to bring at once to my mind the Nubian geographer's account of the *Mare Tenebrarum*.<sup>1</sup> A panorama more deplorably desolate no human imagination can conceive. To the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, there lay outstretched, like ramparts of the world, lines of horribly black and beetling cliff, whose character of gloom was but the more forcibly illustrated by the surf which reared high up against it its white and ghastly crest, howling and shrieking forever. Just

<sup>1</sup> "the sea of darkness," or outer ocean, i.e., the Atlantic

opposite the promontory upon whose apex we were placed, and at a distance of some five or six miles out at sea, there was visible a small, bleak-looking island, or, more properly, its position was discernible through the wilderness of surge in which it was enveloped. About two miles nearer the land arose another of smaller size, hideously craggy and barren, and encompassed at various intervals by a cluster of dark rocks.

The appearance of the ocean, in the space between the more distant island and the shore, had something very unusual about it. Although, at the time, so strong a gale was blowing landward that a brig in the remote offing lay to under a double-reefed trysail, and constantly plunged her whole hull out of sight, still, there was here nothing like a regular swell, but only a short, quick, angry cross-dashing of water in every direction—as well in the teeth of the wind as otherwise. Of foam there was little except in the immediate vicinity of the rocks.

"The island in the distance," resumed the old man, "is called by the Norwegians Vurrgh. The one midway is Moskoe. That a mile to the northward is Ambaaren. Yonder are Ifesen, Hoeyholm, Kieldholm, Suarven, and Buckholm. Farther off—between Moskoe and Vurrgh—are Otterholm, Flimen, Sandflesen, and Skarholm. These are the true names of the places—but why it has been thought necessary to name them at all is more than either you or I can understand. Do you hear anything? Do you see any change in the water?"

We had now been about ten minutes upon the top of Helsegggen, to which we had ascended from the interior of Lofoden, so that we had caught no glimpse of the sea until it had burst upon us from the summit. As the old man spoke, I became aware of a loud and gradually increasing sound, like the moaning of a vast herd of buffaloes upon an American prairie, and at the same moment I perceived that what seamen term the *chopping* character of the ocean beneath us, was rapidly changing into a current which set to the eastward. Even while I gazed, this current acquired a monstrous velocity. Each moment added to its speed—to its headlong impetuosity. In five minutes the whole sea,

as far as Vurrgh, was lashed into ungovernable fury, but it was between Moskoe and the coast that the main uproar held its sway. Here the vast bed of the waters, seamed and scarred into a thousand conflicting channels, burst suddenly into frenzied convulsion—heaving, boiling, hissing—gyrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on to the eastward with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes, except in precipitous descents.

In a few minutes more, there came over the scene another radical alteration. The general surface grew somewhat more smooth, and the whirlpools, one by one, disappeared, while prodigious streaks of foam became apparent where none had been seen before. These streaks, at length, spreading out to a great distance, and entering into combination, took unto themselves the gyratory motion of the subsided vortices, and seemed to form the germ of another more vast. Suddenly—very suddenly—this assumed a distinct and definite existence, in a circle of more than a mile in diameter. The edge of the whirl was represented by a broad belt of gleaming spray, but no particle of this slipped into the mouth of the terrific funnel, whose interior, as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shining, jet-black wall of water, inclined to the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degrees, speeding dizzily round and round with a swaying and sweltering motion, and sending forth to the winds an appalling voice, half shriek, half roar, such as not even the mighty cataract of Niagara ever lifts up in its agony to Heaven.

The mountain trembled to its very base, and the rock rocked. I threw myself upon my face, and clung to the scant herbage in an excess of nervous agitation.

"Thus," said I at length, to the old man—"this *can* be nothing else than the great whirlpool of the Maelstrom."

"So it is sometimes termed," said he. "We Norwegians call it the Moskoe-ström, from the island of Moskoe in the midway."

The ordinary accounts of this vortex had by no means prepared me for what I saw. That of Jonas Ramus which is perhaps the most circumstantial of any, cannot impart the faintest conception either of the magnifi-



cence or of the horror of the scene—or of the wild bewildering sense of *the novel* which confounds the beholder. I am not sure from what point of view the writer in question surveyed it, nor at what time, but it could neither have been from the summit of Helseggen, nor during a storm. There are some passages of his description, nevertheless, which may be quoted for their details, although their effect is exceedingly feeble in conveying an impression of the spectacle.

"Between Lofoden and Moskoe," he says, "the depth of the water is between thirty-six and forty fathoms, but on the other side, toward Ver (Vurgh), this depth decreases so as not to afford a convenient passage for a vessel, without the risk of splitting on the rocks, which happens even in the calmest weather. When it is flood, the stream runs up the country between Lofoden and Moskoe with a boisterous rapidity, but the roar of its impetuous ebb to the sea is scarce equaled by the loudest and most dreadful cataracts, the noise being heard several leagues off, and the vortices or pits are of such an extent and depth, that if a ship comes within its attraction, it is inevitably absorbed and carried down to the bottom, and there beat to pieces against the rocks, and when the water relaxes, the fragments thereof are thrown up again. But these intervals of tranquillity are only at the turn of the ebb and flood, and in calm weather, and last but a quarter of an hour, its violence gradually returning. When the stream is most boisterous, and its fury heightened by a storm, it is dangerous to come within a Norway mile<sup>1</sup> of it. Boats, yachts, and ships have been carried away by not guarding against it before they were within its reach. It likewise happens frequently that whales come too near the stream, and are overpowered by its violence, but then it is impossible to describe their howlings and bellowings in their fruitless struggles to disengage themselves. A bear once, attempting to swim from Lofoden to Moskoe, was caught by the stream and borne down, while he roared terribly, so as to be heard on shore. Large stocks of firs and pine trees, after being absorbed by the current, rise again broken and torn to such a degree as if bristles grew upon them. This plainly shows the bottom to consist of craggy rocks, among which they are

whirled to and fro. This stream is regulated by the flux and reflux of the sea—it being constantly high and low water every six hours. In the year 1645, early in the morning of Sexagesima Sunday, it raged with such noise and impetuosity that the very stones of the houses on the coast fell to the ground."

In regard to the depth of the water, I could not see how this could have been ascertained at all in the immediate vicinity of the vortex. The "forty fathoms" must have reference only to portions of the channel close upon the shore either of Moskoe or Lofoden. The depth in the center of the Moskoe-strom must be immeasurably greater, and no better proof of this fact is necessary than can be obtained from even the sidelong glance into the abyss of the whirl which may be had from the highest crag of Helseggen. Looking down from this pinnacle upon the howling Phlegethon below, I could not help smiling at the simplicity with which the honest Jonas Ramus records, as a matter difficult of belief, the anecdotes of the whales and the bears, for it appeared to me, in fact, a self-evident thing that the largest ships of the line in existence, coming within the influence of that deadly attraction, could resist it as little as a feather the hurricane, and must disappear bodily and at once.

The attempts to account for the phenomenon—some of which, I remember, seemed to me sufficiently plausible in perusal—now wore a very different and unsatisfactory aspect. The idea generally received is that this, as well as three smaller vortices among the Feroe Islands, "have no other cause than the collision of waves rising and falling, at flux and reflux, against a ridge of rocks and shelves, which confines the water so that it precipitates itself like a cataract, and thus the higher the flood rises, the deeper must the fall be, and the natural result of all is a whirlpool or vortex, the prodigious suction of which is sufficiently known by lesser experiments."—These are the words of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Kircher and others imagine that in the center of the channel of the Maelström is an abyss penetrating the globe, and issuing in some very remote part—the Gulf of Bothnia being somewhat decidedly named in

<sup>1</sup> about four and a half English miles

one instance. This opinion, idle in itself, was the one to which, as I gazed, my imagination most readily assented; and, mentioning it to the guide, I was rather surprised to hear him say that, although it was the view almost universally entertained of the subject by the Norwegians, it nevertheless was not his own. As to the former notion he confessed his inability to comprehend it, and here I agreed with him—for, however conclusive on paper, it becomes altogether unintelligible, and even absurd, amid the thunder of the abyss

"You have had a good look at the whirl now," said the old man, "and if you will creep round this crag, so as to get in its lee, and deaden the roar of the water, I will tell you a story that will convince you I ought to know something of the Moskoe-strom"

I placed myself as desired, and he proceeded

"Myself and my two brothers once owned a schooner-rigged smack of about seventy tons burden, with which we were in the habit of fishing among the islands beyond Moskoe, nearly to Vurgh. In all violent eddies at sea there is good fishing, at proper opportunities, if one has only the courage to attempt it, but among the whole of the Lofoden coastmen we three were the only ones who made a regular business of going out to the islands, as I tell you. The usual grounds are a great way lower down to the southward. There fish can be got at all hours, without much risk, and therefore these places are preferred. The choice spots over here among the rocks, however, not only yield the finest variety, but in far greater abundance, so that we often got in a single day what the more timid of the craft could not scrape together in a week. In fact, we made it a matter of desperate speculation—the risk of life standing instead of labor, and courage answering for capital

"We kept the smack in a cove about five miles higher up the coast than this, and it was our practice, in fine weather, to take advantage of the fifteen minutes' slack to push across the main channel of the Moskoe-ström, far above the pool, and then drop down upon anchorage somewhere near Otterholm, or Sandflesen, where the eddies are not so violent as elsewhere. Here we used to remain until nearly time for slack-water again, when

we weighed and made for home. We never set out upon this expedition without a steady side wind for going and coming—one that we felt sure would not fail us before our return—and we seldom made a miscalculation upon this point. Twice, during six years, we were forced to stay all night at anchor on account of a dead calm, which is a rare thing indeed just about here, and once we had to remain on the grounds nearly a week, starving to death, owing to a gale which blew up shortly after our arrival, and made the channel too boisterous to be thought of. Upon this occasion we should have been driven out to sea in spite of everything (for the whirlpools threw us round and round so violently that, at length, we fouled our anchor and dragged it) if it had not been that we drifted into one of the innumerable cross currents—here to-day and gone tomorrow—which drove us under the lee of Flimen, where, by good luck, we brought up.

"I could not tell you the twenneth part of the difficulties we encountered 'on the ground'—it is a bad spot to be in, even in good weather—but we made shift always to run the gauntlet of the Moskoe-ström itself without accident; although at times my heart has been in my mouth when we happened to be a minute or so behind or before the slack. The wind sometimes was not as strong as we thought it at starting, and then we made rather less way than we could wish, while the current rendered the smack unmanageable. My eldest brother had a son eighteen years old, and I had two stout boys of my own. These would have been of great assistance at such times, in using the sweeps, as well as afterward in fishing—but, somehow, although we ran the risk ourselves, we had not the heart to let the young ones get into the danger—for, after all said and done, it was a horrible danger, and that is the truth

"It is now within a few days of three years since what I am going to tell you occurred. It was on the tenth of July, 18—, a day which the people of this part of the world will never forget—for it was one in which blew the most terrible hurricane that ever came out of the heavens. And yet all the morning, and indeed until late in the afternoon, there was a gentle

and steady breeze from the southwest, while the sun shone brightly, so that the oldest seaman among us could not have foreseen what was to follow.

"The three of us—my two brothers and myself—had crossed over to the islands about two o'clock P M., and soon nearly loaded the smack with fine fish, which, we all remarked, were more plenty that day than we had ever known them. It was just seven, *by my watch*, 10 when we weighed and started for home, so as to make the worst of the Strom at slack water, which we knew would be at eight.

"We set out with a fresh wind on our star-board quarter, and for some time spanked along at a great rate, never dreaming of danger, for indeed we saw not the slightest reason to apprehend it. All at once we were taken aback by a breeze from over Helsegen. This was most unusual—something that had never happened to us before—and I began to feel a little uneasy, without exactly know- 20 ing why. We put the boat on the wind, but could make no headway at all for the eddies, and I was upon the point of proposing to return to the anchorage, when, looking astern, we saw the whole horizon covered with a singular copper-colored cloud that rose with the most amazing velocity.

"In the meantime the breeze that had 30 headed us off fell away, and we were dead becalmed, drifting about in every direction. This state of things, however, did not last long enough to give us time to think about it. In less than a minute the storm was upon us—in less than two the sky was entirely overcast—and what with this and the driving spray, it became suddenly so dark that we could not see each other in the smack.

"Such a hurricane as then blew it is folly to 40 attempt describing. The oldest seaman in Norway never experienced anything like it. We had let our sails go by the run before it cleverly took us, but, at the first puff, both our masts went by the board as if they had been sawed off—the mainmast taking with it my youngest brother, who had lashed himself to it for safety.

"Our boat was the lightest feather of a 50 thing that ever sat upon water. It had a complete flush deck, with only a small hatch near

the bow, and this hatch it had always been our custom to batten down when about to cross the Ström, by way of precaution against the chopping seas. But for this circumstance we should have foundered at once—for we lay entirely buried for some moments. How my elder brother escaped destruction I cannot say, for I never had an opportunity of ascertaining. For my part, as soon as I had let the foresail run, I threw myself flat on deck, with my feet against the narrow gunwale of the bow, and with my hands grasping a ringbolt near the foot of the foremast. It was mere instinct that prompted me to do this—which was undoubtedly the very best thing I could have done—for I was too much flurried to think.

"For some moments we were completely 60 deluged, as I say, and all this time I held my breath, and clung to the bolt. When I could stand it no longer I raised myself upon my knees, still keeping hold with my hands, and thus got my head clear. Presently our little boat gave herself a shake, just as a dog does in coming out of the water, and thus rid herself, in some measure, of the seas. I was now trying to get the better of the stupor that had come over me, and to collect my senses so as to see what was to be done, when I felt some- body grasp my arm. It was my elder brother, and my heart leaped for joy, for I had made sure that he was overboard—but the next moment all this joy was turned into horror—for he put his mouth close to my ear, and screamed out the word '*Moskoe-strom!*'

"No one will ever know what my feelings were at that moment. I shook from head to foot as if I had had the most violent fit of the ague. I knew what he meant by that one word well enough—I knew what he wished to make me understand. With the wind that now drove us on, we were bound for the whirl of the Ström, and nothing could save us!

"You perceive that in crossing the Strom channel, we always went a long way up above the whirl, even in the calmest weather, and then had to wait and watch carefully for the slack—but now we were driving right upon the pool itself, and in such a hurricane as this! 'To be sure,' I thought, 'we shall get there just about the slack—there is some little hope

in that'—but in the next moment I cursed myself for being so great a fool as to dream of hope at all. I knew very well that we were doomed, had we been ten times a ninety-gun ship.

"By this time the first fury of the tempest had spent itself, or perhaps we did not feel it so much as we scudded before it, but at all events the seas, which at first had been kept down by the wind, and lay flat and frothing, now got up into absolute mountains. A singular change, too, had come over the heavens. Around in every direction it was still as black as pitch, but nearly overhead there burst out, all at once, a circular rift of clear sky—as clear as I ever saw—and of a deep bright blue—and through it there blazed forth the full moon with a luster that I never before knew her to wear. She lit up everything about us with the greatest distinctness—but, oh God, what a scene it was to light up!

"I now made one or two attempts to speak to my brother—but, in some manner which I could not understand, the din had so increased that I could not make him hear a single word, although I screamed at the top of my voice in his ear. Presently he shook his head, looking as pale as death, and held up one of his fingers, as if to say *listen!*

"At first I could not make out what he meant—but soon a hideous thought flashed upon me. I dragged my watch from its fob. It was not going. I glanced at its face by the moonlight, and then burst into tears as I flung it far away into the ocean. *It had run down at seven o'clock! We were behind the time of the slack, and the whirl of the Strom was in full fury!*

"When a boat is well built, properly trimmed, and not deep laden, the waves in a strong gale, when she is going large, seem always to slip from beneath her—which appears very strange to a landsman—and this is what is called *riding*, in sea phrase.

"Well, so far we had ridden the swells very cleverly; but presently a gigantic sea happened to take us right under the counter, and bore us with it as it rose—up—up—as if into the sky. I would not have believed that any wave could rise so high. And then down we

came with a sweep, a slide, and a plunge, that made me feel sick and dizzy, as if I was falling from some lofty mountain-top in a dream. But while we were up I had thrown a quick glance around—and that one glance was all-sufficient. I saw our exact position in an instant. The Moskoe-strom whirlpool was about a quarter of a mile dead ahead—but no more like the everyday Moskoe-strom, than the whirl as you now see it is like a mill race. If I had not known where we were, and what we had to expect, I should not have recognized the place at all. As it was, I involuntarily closed my eyes in horror. The lids clenched themselves together as if in a spasm.

"It could not have been more than two minutes afterwards until we suddenly felt the waves subside, and were enveloped in foam. The boat made a sharp half turn to larboard, and then shot off in its new direction like a thunderbolt. At the same moment the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek—such a sound as you might imagine given out by the water-pipes of many thousand steam vessels, letting off their steam all together. We were now in the belt of surf that always surrounds the whirl, and I thought, of course, that another moment would plunge us into the abyss—down which we could only see indistinctly on account of the amazing velocity with which we were borne along. The boat did not seem to sink into the water at all, but to skim like an air-bubble upon the surface of the surge. Her starboard side was next the whirl, and on the larboard arose the world of ocean we had left. It stood like a huge writhing wall between us and the horizon.

"It may appear strange, but now, when we were in the very jaws of the gulf, I felt more composed than when we were only approaching it. Having made up my mind to hope no more, I got rid of a great deal of that terror which unmanned me at first. I suppose it was despair that strung my nerves.

"It may look like boasting—but what I tell you is truth—I began to reflect how magnificent a thing it was to die in such a manner, and how foolish it was in me to think of so paltry a consideration as my own individual life, in view of so wonderful a manifestation

of God's power. I do believe that I blushed with shame when this idea crossed my mind. After a little while I became possessed with the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself. I positively felt a *wish* to explore its depths, even at the sacrifice I was going to make, and my principal grief was that I should never be able to tell my old companions on shore about the mysteries I should see. These, no doubt, were singular fancies to occupy a man's mind in such extremity—and I have often thought since, that the revolutions of the boat around the pool might have rendered me a little light-headed.

"There was another circumstance which tended to restore my self-possession, and this was the cessation of the wind, which could not reach us in our present situation—for, as you saw yourself, the belt of surf is considerably lower than the general bed of the ocean, and thus latter now towered above us, a high, black, mountainous ridge. If you have never been at sea in a heavy gale, you can form no idea of the confusion of mind occasioned by the wind and spray together. They blind, deafen, and strangle you, and take away all power of action or reflection. But we were now, in a great measure, rid of these annoyances—just as death-condemned felons in prisons are allowed petty indulgences, forbidden them while their doom is yet uncertain.

"How often we made the circuit of the belt it is impossible to say. We careered round and round for perhaps an hour, flying rather than floating, getting gradually more and more into the middle of the surge, and then nearer and nearer to its horrible inner edge. All this time I had never let go of the ring-bolt. My brother was at the stern, holding on to a small empty water-cask which had been securely lashed under the coop of the counter, and was the only thing on deck that had not been swept overboard when the gale first took us. As we approached the brink of the pit he let go his hold upon this, and made for the ring, from which, in the agony of his terror, he endeavored to force my hands, as it was not large enough to afford us both a secure grasp. I never felt deeper grief than when I saw him attempt this act—although I

knew he was a madman when he did it—a raving maniac through sheer fright. I did not care, however, to contest the point with him. I knew it could make no difference whether either of us held on at all, so I let him have the bolt, and went astern to the cask. This there was no great difficulty in doing; for the smack flew round steadily enough, and upon an even keel—only swaying to and fro, with the immense sweeps and swelters of the whirl. Scarcely had I secured myself in my new position, when we gave a wild lurch to starboard, and rushed headlong into the abyss. I muttered a hurried prayer to God, and thought all was over.

"As I felt the sickening sweep of the descent, I had instinctively tightened my hold upon the barrel, and closed my eyes. For some seconds I dared not open them—while I expected instant destruction, and wondered that I was not already in my death-struggles with the water. But moment after moment elapsed I still lived. The sense of falling had ceased, and the motion of the vessel seemed much as it had been before, while in the belt of foam, with the exception that she now lay more along. I took courage and looked once again upon the scene.

"Never shall I forget the sensations of awe, horror, and admiration with which I gazed about me. The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down, upon the interior surface of a funnel vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony, but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun around, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth, as the rays of the full moon, from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, streamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls, and far away down into the inmost recesses of the abyss.

"At first I was too much confused to observe anything accurately. The general burst of terrific grandeur was all that I beheld. When I recovered myself a little, however, my gaze fell instinctively downward. In this direction I was able to obtain an unobstructed view, from the manner in which the smack hung on the inclined surface of the pool. She

was quite upon an even keel—that is to say, her deck lay in a plane parallel with that of the water—but this latter sloped at an angle of more than forty-five degrees, so that we seemed to be lying upon our beam-ends. I could not help observing, nevertheless, that I had scarcely more difficulty in maintaining my hold and footing in this situation, than if we had been upon a dead level, and this, I suppose, was owing to the speed at which we revolved.

“The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf, but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmen say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel, as they all met together at the bottom—but the yell that went up to the heavens from out of that mist, I dare not attempt to describe.

“Our first slide into the abyss itself, from the belt of foam above, had carried us to a great distance down the slope, but our farther descent was by no means proportionate. Round and round we swept—not with any uniform movement, but in dizzying swings and jerks, that sent us sometimes only a few hundred yards—sometimes nearly the complete circuit of the whirl. Our progress downward, at each revolution, was slow, but very perceptible.

“Looking about me upon the wide waste of liquid ebony on which we were thus borne, I perceived that our boat was not the only object in the embrace of the whirl. Both above and below us were visible fragments of vessels, large masses of building timber and trunks of trees, with many smaller articles, such as pieces of house furniture, broken boxes, barrels, and staves. I have already described the unnatural curiosity which had taken the place of my original terrors. It appeared to grow upon me as I drew nearer and nearer to my dreadful doom. I now began to watch, with a strange interest, the numerous things that floated in our company. I must

have been delirious—for I even sought amusement in speculating upon the relative velocities of their several descents toward the foam below. ‘This fir tree,’ I found myself at one time saying, ‘will certainly be the next thing that takes the awful plunge and disappears,’—and then I was disappointed to find that the wreck of a Dutch merchant ship overtook it and went down before it. At length, after making several guesses of this nature, and being deceived in all—this fact—the fact of my invariable miscalculation, set me upon a train of reflection that made my limbs again tremble, and my heart beat heavily once more.

“It was not a new terror that thus affected me, but the dawn of a more exciting hope. This hope arose partly from memory, and partly from present observation. I called to mind the great variety of buoyant matter that strewed the coast of Lofoden, having been absorbed and then thrown forth by the Moskoe-strom. By far the greater number of the articles were shattered in the most extraordinary way—so chafed and roughened as to have the appearance of being stuck full of splinters—but then I distinctly recollected that there were some of them which were not disfigured at all. Now I could not account for this difference except by supposing that the roughened fragments were the only ones which had been completely absorbed—that the others had entered the whirl at so late a period of the tide, or, from some reason, had descended so slowly after entering, that they did not reach the bottom before the turn of the flood came, or of the ebb, as the case might be. I conceived it possible, in either instance, that they might thus be whirled up again to the level of the ocean, without undergoing the fate of those which had been drawn in more early or absorbed more rapidly. I made, also, three important observations. The first was, that as a general rule, the larger the bodies were, the more rapid their descent, the second, that, between two masses of equal extent, the one spherical, and the other of any other shape, the superiority in speed of descent was with the sphere; the third, that, between two masses of equal size, the one cylindrical, and the other of any other shape,

the cylinder was absorbed the more slowly. Since my escape, I have had several conversations on this subject with an old schoolmaster of the district, and it was from him that I learned the use of the words 'cylinder' and 'sphere.' He explained to me—although I have forgotten the explanation—how what I observed was, in fact, the natural consequence of the forms of the floating fragments, and showed me how it happened that a cylinder, 10 swimming in a vortex, offered more resistance to its suction, and was drawn in with greater difficulty, than an equally bulky body, of any form whatever.<sup>1</sup>

"There was one startling circumstance which went a great way in enforcing these observations, and rendering me anxious to turn them to account, and this was that, at every revolution, we passed something like a barrel, or else the yard or the mast of a vessel, 20 while many of these things, which had been on our level when I first opened my eyes upon the wonders of the whirlpool, were now high up above us, and seemed to have moved but little from their original station.

"I no longer hesitated what to do. I resolved to lash myself securely to the water-cask upon which I now held, to cut it loose from the counter, and to throw myself with it into the water. I attracted my brother's attention by signs, pointed to the floating barrels that came near us, and did everything in my power to make him understand what I was about to do. I thought at length that he comprehended my design—but, whether this was the case or not, he shook his head despairingly, and refused to move from his station by the ring-bolt. It was impossible to reach him, the emergency admitted of no delay, and so, with a bitter struggle, I resigned 40 him to his fate, fastened myself to the cask by means of the lashings which secured it to the counter, and precipitated myself with it into the sea, without another moment's hesitation

<sup>1</sup> "See Archimedes, *De us Qua in Humido Vehuntur*, lib. ii." [Poe's note.] Poe's reference is to one of the preserved treatises of Archimedes, the title of which is usually translated as *On Bodies Floating in Liquids*. It is in two books, on the principles of floating, and the positions of equilibrium of certain kinds of floating 50 bodies.

"The result was precisely what I had hoped it might be. As it is myself who now tell you this tale—as you see that I *did* escape—and as you are already in possession of the mode in which this escape was effected, and must therefore anticipate all that I have farther to say—I will bring my story quickly to conclusion. It might have been an hour, or thereabout, after my quitting the smack, when, having descended to a vast distance beneath me, it made three or four wild gyrations in rapid succession, and, bearing my loved brother with it, plunged headlong, at once and forever, into the chaos of foam below. The barrel to which I was attached sunk very little farther than half the distance between the bottom of the gulf and the spot at which I leaped overboard, before a great change took place in the character of the whirlpool. The slope of the sides of the vast funnel became momentarily less and less steep. The gyrations of the whirl grew, gradually, less and less violent. By degrees, the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to uprise. The sky was clear, the winds had gone down, and the full moon was setting radiantly in the west, when I found myself on the surface of the ocean, in full view of the shores of Lofoden, and above the spot where the pool of the Moskoe-strom 30 *had been*. It was the hour of the slack, but the sea still heaved in mountainous waves from the effects of the hurricane. I was borne violently into the channel of the Strom, and in a few minutes was hurried down the coast into the 'grounds' of the fishermen. A boat picked me up—exhausted from fatigue—and (now that the danger was removed) speechless from the memory of its horror. Those who drew me on board were my old mates and daily companions, but they knew me no more than they would have known a traveler from the spirit-land. My hair, which had been raven-black the day before, was as white as you see it now. They say, too, that the whole expression of my countenance had changed. I told them my story—they did not believe it. I now tell it to you—and I can scarcely expect you to put more faith in it than did the merry fishermen of Lofoden." 50

## ELEONORA

One of Poe's tales of fantasy and extravaganza. Its locale is "out of space, out of time." Its chief content is description. It is marked by elaboration of background, symbolism, rich color, and beautiful melody, there is even the suggestion of a poetic refrain "In this alone of all his tales," says Woodberry, "is there any sign of the warmth, the vital sense of human love."

Sub conservatione formæ specificæ salva anima<sup>1</sup>

RAYMOND LULLY

I AM come of a race noted for vigor of fancy and ardor of passion. Men have called me mad; but the question is not yet settled, whether madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence—whether much that is glorious, whether all that is profound, does not spring from disease of thought—from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect. They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. In their gray visions they obtain glimpses of eternity, and thrill in awaking to find that they have been upon the verge of the great secret. In snatches, they learn something of the wisdom which is of good, and more of the mere knowledge which is of evil. They penetrate, however rudderless or compassless, into the vast ocean of the "light ineffable", and again, like the adventures of the Nubian geographer, "*aggressi sunt mare tenebrarum, quid in eo esset exploraturi*"<sup>2</sup>

We will say, then, that I am mad. I grant, at least, that there are two distinct conditions of my mental existence—the condition of a lucid reason, not to be disputed, and belonging to the memory of events forming the first epoch of my life—and a condition of shadow and doubt, appertaining to the present, and to the recollection of what constitutes the second great era of my being. Therefore what I shall tell of the earlier period, believe, and to what I may relate of the later time, give only such credit as may seem due, or doubt it altogether; or, if doubt it ye cannot, then play unto its riddle the *Œdipus*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "With the preservation of a specific form, the soul is secure." <sup>2</sup> "They entered the sea of darkness in order that they might explore what was therein."

<sup>3</sup> the king of Thebes, in Greek mythology, who freed the country from the Sphinx by solving her riddle

She whom I loved in youth, and of whom I now pen calmly and distinctly these remembrances, was the sole daughter of the only sister of my mother long departed. Eleonora was the name of my cousin. We had always dwelled together, beneath a tropical sun, in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. No unguided footstep ever came upon that vale, for it lay far away up among a range of giant hills that hung beetling around about it, shutting out the sunlight from its sweetest recesses. No path was trodden in its vicinity, and, to reach our happy home, there was need of putting back with force the foliage of many thousands of forest trees, and of crushing to death the glories of many millions of fragrant flowers. Thus it was that we lived all alone, knowing nothing of the world without the valley,—I, and my cousin, and her mother.

From the dim regions beyond the mountains at the upper end of our encircled domain, there crept out a narrow and deep river, brighter than all save the eyes of Eleonora, and, winding stealthily about in mazy courses, it passed away at length through a shadowy gorge, among hills still dimmer than those whence it had issued. We called it the "River of Silence", for there seemed to be a hushing influence in its flow. No murmur arose from its bed, and so gently it wandered along that the pearly pebbles upon which we loved to gaze, far down within its bosom, stirred not at all, but lay in a motionless content, each in its own old station, shining on gloriously forever.

The margin of the river, and of the many dazzling rivulets that glided through devious ways into its channel, as well as the spaces that extended from the margins away down into the depths of the streams until they reached the bed of pebbles at the bottom,—these spots, not less than the whole surface of the valley, from the river to the mountains that girdled it in, were carpeted all by a soft green grass, thick, short, perfectly even, and vanilla-perfumed, but so besprinkled throughout with the yellow buttercup, the white daisy, the purple violet, and the ruby-red asphodel, that its exceeding beauty spoke to our hearts in loud tones of the love and of the glory of God.

And, here and there, in groves about this



grass, like wildernesses of dreams, sprang up fantastic trees, whose tall slender stems stood not upright, but slanted gracefully towards the light that peered at noonday into the center of the valley. Their bark was speckled with the vivid alternate splendor of ebony and silver, and was smoother than all save the cheeks of Eleonora; so that, but for the brilliant green of the huge leaves that spread from their summits in long, tremulous lines, dally-  
 10 ing with the Zephyrs, one might have fancied them giant serpents of Syria doing homage to their Sovereign the Sun.

Hand in hand about this valley, for fifteen years, roamed I with Eleonora before Love entered within our hearts. It was one evening at the close of the third lustrum<sup>1</sup> of her life, and of the fourth of my own, that we sat, locked in each other's embrace, beneath the serpent-like trees, and looked down within the waters of the River of Silence at our images therein. We spoke no words during the rest of that sweet day, and our words even upon the morrow were tremulous and few. We had drawn the god Eros from that wave, and now we felt that he had enkindled within us the fiery souls of our forefathers. The passions which had for centuries distinguished our race came thronging with the fancies for which they had been equally noted, and to-  
 20 gether breathed a delicious bliss over the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. A change fell upon all things. Strange, brilliant flowers, star-shaped, burst out upon the trees where no flowers had been known before. The tints of the green carpet deepened, and when, one by one, the white daisies shrank away, there sprang up in place of them ten by ten of the ruby-red asphodel. And life arose in our  
 30 paths; for the tall flamingo, hitherto unseen, with all gay glowing birds, flaunted his scarlet plumage before us. The golden and silver fish haunted the river, out of the bosom of which issued, little by little, a murmur that swelled, at length, into a lulling melody more divine than that of the harp of Æolus—sweeter than all save the voice of Eleonora. And now, too, a voluminous cloud, which we had long watched in the regions of Hesper,<sup>2</sup>

floated out thence, all gorgeous in crimson and gold, and, settling in peace above us, sank, day by day, lower and lower, until its edges rested upon the tops of the mountains, turning all their dimness into magnificence, and shutting us up, as if forever, within a magic prison-house of grandeur and of glory.

The loveliness of Eleonora was that of the Seraphim, but she was a maiden artless and innocent as the brief life she had led among the flowers. No guile disguised the fervor of love which animated her heart, and she examined with me its inmost recesses as we walked together in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, and discoursed of the mighty changes which had lately taken place therein.

At length, having spoken one day, in tears, of the last sad change which must befall Humanity, she thenceforward dwelt only upon this one sorrowful theme, interweaving it into all our converse, as, in the songs of the bard of Schiraz, the same images are found occurring again and again in every impres-  
 40 sive variation of phrase.

She had seen that the finger of Death was upon her bosom—that, like the ephemeron,<sup>1</sup> she had been made perfect in loveliness only to die, but the terrors of the grave to her lay solely in a consideration which she revealed to me one evening at twilight, by the banks of the River of Silence. She grieved to think that, having entombed her in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, I would quit forever its happy recesses, transferring the love which now was so passionately her own to some maiden of the outer and everyday world. And then and there I threw myself hurriedly at the feet of Eleonora, and offered up a vow to herself and to Heaven that I would never bind myself in marriage to any daughter of Earth—that I would in no manner prove recreant to her dear memory, or to the memory of the devout affection with which she had blessed me. And I called the Mighty Ruler of the Universe to witness the pious solemnity of my vow. And the curse which I invoked of Him and of her, a saint in Helusion,<sup>2</sup> should I prove traitorous to that promise, involved a penalty the exceeding  
 50 great horror of which will not permit me to

<sup>1</sup> period of five years    <sup>2</sup> the west, as Hesper is the evening star

<sup>1</sup> an insect that lives but a day    <sup>2</sup> Elysium

make record of it here. And the bright eyes of Eleonora grew brighter at my words; and she sighed as if a deadly burden had been taken from her breast; and she trembled and very bitterly wept; but she made acceptance of the vow (for what was she but a child?), and it made easy to her the bed of her death. And she said to me, not many days afterwards, tranquilly dying, that, because of what I had done for the comfort of her spirit, she would watch over me in that spirit when departed, and, if so it were permitted her, return to me visibly in the watches of the night, but, if this thing were indeed beyond the power of the souls in Paradise, that she would at least give me frequent indications of her presence, sighing upon me in the evening winds, or filling the air which I breathed with perfume from the censers of the angels. And, with these words upon her lips, she yielded up her innocent life, putting an end to the first epoch of my own.

Thus far I have faithfully said. But as I pass the barrier in Time's path formed by the death of my beloved, and proceed with the second era of my existence, I feel that a shadow gathers over my brain, and I mistrust the perfect sanity of the record. But let me on—Years dragged themselves along heavily, and still I dwelled within the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, but a second change had come upon all things. The star-shaped flowers shrank into the stems of the trees, and appeared no more. The tints of the green carpet faded, and, one by one, the ruby-red asphodels withered away, and there sprang up in place of them, ten by ten, dark, eye-like violets, that writhed uneasily and were ever encumbered with dew. And Life departed from our paths, for the tall flamingo flaunted no longer his scarlet plumage before us, but flew sadly from the vale into the hills, with all the gay glowing birds that had arrived in his company. And the golden and silver fish swam down through the gorge at the lower end of our domain, and bedecked the sweet river never again. And the lulling melody that had been softer than the wind-harp of Æolus, and more divine than all save the voice of Eleonora, it died little by little away, in murmurs growing lower and lower, until the

stream returned, at length, utterly into the solemnity of its original silence. And then, lastly, the voluminous cloud uprose, and, abandoning the tops of the mountains to the dimness of old, fell back into the regions of Hesper, and took away all its manifold golden and gorgeous glories from the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass.

Yet the promises of Eleonora were not forgotten; for I heard the sounds of the swinging of the censers of the angels, and streams of a holy perfume floated ever and ever about the valley, and at lone hours, when my heart beat heavily, the winds that bathed my brow came unto me laden with soft sighs, and indistinct murmurs filled often the night air; and once—oh, but once only! I was awakened from a slumber, like the slumber of death, by the pressing of spiritual lips upon my own.

But the void within my heart refused, even thus, to be filled. I longed for the love which had before filled it to overflowing. At length the valley pained me through its memories of Eleonora, and I left it forever for the vanities and the turbulent triumphs of the world.

I found myself within a strange city, where all things might have served to blot from recollection the sweet dreams I had dreamed so long in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. The pomps and pageantries of a stately court, and the mad clangor of arms, and the radiant loveliness of woman, bewildered and intoxicated my brain. But as yet my soul had proved true to its vows, and the indications of the presence of Eleonora were still given me in the silent hours of the night. Suddenly these manifestations—they ceased; and the world grew dark before mine eyes, and I stood aghast at the burning thoughts which possessed, at the terrible temptations which beset me, for there came from some far, far distant and unknown land, into the gay court of the king I served, a maiden to whose beauty my whole recreant heart yielded at once—at whose footstool I bowed down without a struggle, in the most ardent, in the most abject worship of love. What, indeed, was my passion for the young girl of the valley in comparison with the

fervor, and the delirium, and the spirit-lifting ecstasy of adoration, with which I poured out my whole soul in tears at the feet of the ethereal Ermengarde? Oh, bright was the seraph Ermengarde! and in that knowledge I had room for none other. Oh, divine was the angel Ermengarde! and as I looked down into the depths of her memorial eyes, I thought only of them—and of *her*.

I wedded,—nor dreaded the curse I had invoked, and its bitterness was not visited upon me. And once—but once again in the silence of the night, there came through my lattice the soft sighs which had forsaken me, and they modeled themselves into familiar and sweet voice, saying —

"Sleep in peace!—for the Spirit of Love reigneth and ruleth, and, in taking to thy passionate heart her who is Ermengarde, thou art absolved, for reasons which shall be made known to thee in Heaven, of thy vows unto Eleonora."

1842

### THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH

Poe was at his best in the composition of spectral fantasies. The structure of this story is as carefully wrought as that of "The Fall of the House of Usher," and, like the latter, it presents a single episode in a skilfully manipulated setting. In this story it is that bizarre, rich environment that he so often imagines. Striking features are the description of the sequence of rooms, with their "Gothic" properties, the figures in the masquerade, and the culminating encounter in the last room, for which all the preceding details have prepared. The language of the tale is rhythmic and poetic.

THE "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar<sup>1</sup> and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body, and especially upon the face, of the victim were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-

<sup>1</sup> reincarnation, symbol

men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the Prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from without. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the mean time it was folly to grieve, or to think. The Prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori,<sup>1</sup> there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding-doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the Prince's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the

<sup>1</sup> those who compose and sing extempore

middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass, whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange, the fifth with white, the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But, in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood-color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire, that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang, and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note

and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound, and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions, and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company, and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly, the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion, and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the Prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora*<sup>1</sup> of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric luster. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fête*, and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani*<sup>2</sup>. There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delicious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited

<sup>1</sup> decorations    <sup>2</sup> the famous tragedy produced in 1830 by Victor Hugo, usually regarded as the beginning in France of the nineteenth-century romantic drama

disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture, for the night is waning away, and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes, and the blackness of the sable drapery appalls, and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulge in the more remote gayeties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told, and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted, and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock, and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at

length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited, but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod,<sup>1</sup> and gone beyond the bounds of even the Prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed: The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers alone. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its rôle, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste, but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered

<sup>1</sup> an expression in Hamlet's speech to the players (*Hamlet*, III, ii)

these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the Prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand

It was in the blue room where stood the Prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him, so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the Prince's person, and while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him, on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave ceremonies and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all

1842

### THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

This tale of vengeful spirit and thrilling malignity was published in an unexpected place, *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1846. Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" has been criticized as slow in opening. This tale in dialogue form could hardly move more quickly or be more condensed. It shows that Poe could present his stories dramatically, as well as in the usual mode of his day. The background is the Roman catacombs, the period not that of the Borgias and the Medicis, but Rome of the nineteenth century, in the carnival season. The tone and the suspense are maintained till the end. Poe does not supply the motivation of his central character, what it was that urged him to his diabolic revenge remains unexplained.

THE thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged, this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good-will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be



"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back, you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said, "the cough is a mere nothing, it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied, "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure<sup>1</sup>, the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"<sup>2</sup>

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said, "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

<sup>1</sup> a foot of gold on a blue field      <sup>2</sup> "No one attacks me with impunity."

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grève. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my *roquelaure*.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaus rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his



dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amonillado. As for Luchesi!"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall, you cannot help feeling the muer. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *improve* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amonillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied, "the Amonillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth, and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the

sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeau over the mason work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamor grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight, I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amonillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amonillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo,—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of

the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat.*

1846

## THE PURLOINED LETTER

This narrative well illustrates Poe's tales of reasoning, of which "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is another example and "The Cold Bug" perhaps the best. It also illustrates Poe's second type of hero, who is little more than a disembodied intellect, interested not in ideas but in the detection of fact. The plot proportions are unusual, but, granting the type of structure, the method is successful. In the middle of the story the complication ends and the explication begins. Poe's tales of Dupin started the tradition of the Master Mind who solves mysteries and of the colorless, almost impersonal confidant or narrator, prototypes of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. The tradition begins also of the stupid police, whose futile efforts need outside supplementation.

Nil sapientiae odiosius acutimine nimio<sup>1</sup>

SENECA

At Paris, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschauum, in company with my friend, C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book closet, *au troisième*,<sup>2</sup> No. 33 Rue Dunôt, Faubourg St. Germain. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence, while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Rogêt. I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted

our old acquaintance, Monsieur G—, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

We gave him a hearty welcome, for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G—'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend, about some official business which had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forbore to enkindle the wick, "we shall examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the Prefect, who had a fashion of calling everything "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked. "Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope?"

"Oh, no, nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is *very* simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively odd."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that, either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled because the affair is so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you do talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily.

"Perhaps the mystery is a little too plain," said Dupin.

"Oh, good heavens! who ever heard of such an idea?"

"A little too self evident."

"Hal hal hal—hal hal hal—hol hol hol!" roared our visitor, profoundly amused, "oh, Dupin, you will be the death of me yet!"

<sup>1</sup> "Nothing more hateful to wisdom than overcleverness." <sup>2</sup> on the third floor, i.e., the third floor above the ground floor

"And what, after all, is the matter on hand?" I asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the Prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold were it known that I confided it to any one."

"Proceed," said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then, I have received personal information from a very high quarter that a certain document of the last importance has been purloined from the royal apartments. The individual who purloined it is known, this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."

"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the Prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing out of the robber's possession, that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The Prefect was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? Well, the disclosure of the document to a third person, who shall be nameless, would bring in question the honor of a personage of most exalted station, and thus fact gives the holder of the document an ascendancy over the illustrious personage whose honor and peace are so jeopardized."

"But this ascendancy," I interposed, "would depend upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber. Who would dare?"

"The thief," said G——, "is the Minister D——, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The

method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question—a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal boudoir. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage, from whom especially it was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavor to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and, the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D——. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognizes the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses for some fifteen minutes upon the public affairs. At length in taking leave he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but of course dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage, who stood at her elbow. The Minister decamped, leaving his own letter—one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have precisely what you demand to make the ascendancy complete—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber."

"Yes," replied the Prefect, "and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded, for political purposes, to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced, every day, of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this, of course, cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose, be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the Prefect, "but it is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the Minister, since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter, which bestows the power. With the employment the power departs."

"True," said G——; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the Minister's Hotel, and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite *au fait*<sup>1</sup> in these investigations. The Parisian police have done this thing often before."

"Oh, yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The habits of the Minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and, being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D—— Hotel. My honor is interested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the Minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D—— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its possession."

<sup>1</sup> expert

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I.

"That is to say, of being *destroyed*," said Dupin.

"True," I observed, "the paper is clearly then upon the premises. As for its being upon the person of the Minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the Prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this trouble," said Dupin. "D——, I presume, is not altogether a fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings as a matter of course."

"Not *altogether* a fool," said G——, "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggerel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of your search?"

"Why, the fact is, we took our time, and we searched *everywhere*. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room, devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer, and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police agent, such a thing as a *secret* drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is *so* plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top re-

placed. The bottoms and tops of bedposts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?" I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around it. Besides, in our case we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces *all* articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung of a chair, for example. You did not take to pieces all the chairs?"

"Certainly not, but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the Hotel, and indeed, the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust, for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disorder in the gluing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bedclothes, as well as the curtains and carpets?"

"That, of course, and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinized each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining!" I exclaimed; "you must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had, but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the *grounds* about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D——'s papers, of course, and into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel; we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-cover, with the most accurate admeasurement, and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation. Some five or six volumes, just from the hands of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

"Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "you have been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose."

"I fear you are right there," said the Prefect. "And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do?"

"To make a thorough re-search of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G——. "I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the Hotel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh, yes!"—And here the Prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterwards he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very

nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair, and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said,—

"Well, but G——, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as over-reaching the Minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes, I made the re-examination, however, as Dupin suggested—but it was all labor lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?" asked Dupin.

"Why, a very great deal—a very liberal reward—I don't like to say how much precisely; but one thing I will say, that I wouldn't mind giving my individual check for fifty thousand francs to any one who could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day, and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."

"Why, yes," said Dupin, drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G——, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might—do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How?—in what way?"

"Why—puff, puff—you might—puff, puff—employ counsel in the matter, eh?—puff, puff, puff—Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"

"No, hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of sponging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician, as that of an imaginary individual."

"'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such, now, doctor, what would you have directed him to take?'"

"'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take *advice*, to be sure.'"

"'But,' said the Prefect, a little discomposed, 'I am perfectly willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would *really* give fifty thousand

francs to any one who would aid me in the matter.'"

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a checkbook, "you may as well fill me up a check for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

I was astounded. The Prefect appeared absolutely thunderstricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a check for fifty thousand francs, and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocketbook; then, unlocking an escritoire, took thence a letter and gave it to the Prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then, scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the check.

When he had gone, my friend entered into some explanations.

"The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G—— detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hotel D——, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation—so far as his labors extended."

"So far as his labors extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond a question, have found it."

I merely laughed—but he seemed quite serious in all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the

case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are, with the Prefect, a sort of Procrustean bed<sup>1</sup> to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow, for the matter in hand; and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles. One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right, the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing, and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and, holding up his closed hand, asks, 'Are they even or odd?' Our schoolboy replies, 'Odd,' and loses, but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'The simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second, I will therefore guess odd,' he guesses odd, and wins. Now, with a simpleton a degree above the first he would have reasoned thus: 'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and in the second he will propose to himself, upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, as did the first simpleton, but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even,' he guesses even, and wins. Now, this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky'—what, in its last analysis, is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin, "and, upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the thorough identification in which his success

consisted, I received answer as follows: 'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucauld, to La Bruyère, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."

"For its practical value it depends upon this," replied Dupin, "and the Prefect and his cohort fail so frequently first, by default of this identification, and secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through nonadmeasurement, of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their own ideas of ingenuity, and, in searching for anything hidden, advert only to the modes in which *they* would have lugged it. They are right in this much—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of the mass; but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them, of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigations, at best, when urged by some unusual emergency—by some extraordinary reward—they extend or exaggerate their old modes of practice, without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D—, has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinizing with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches—what is it all but an exaggeration of the application of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the Prefect, in the long

<sup>1</sup> the famous bed to which the legendary Greek robber, Procrustes, made his victims fit, by stretching them if too short, and by cutting off portions of their limbs if they were too long

routine of his duty, has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that *all* men proceed to conceal a letter,—not exactly in a gimlet hole bored in a chair-leg—but, at least, in *some* out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair leg? And do you not see, also, that such *recherchés*<sup>1</sup> nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects, for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed—a disposal of it in this *recherché* manner—is, in the very first instance, presumable and presumed, and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but altogether upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers; and where the case is of importance—or, what amounts to the same thing in the police eyes, when the reward is of magnitude—the qualities in question have never been known to fail. You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that, had the purloined letter been hidden anywhere within the limits of the Prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the Prefect—its discovery would have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary, however, has been thoroughly mystified, and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the Minister is a fool because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets, this the Prefect feels, and he is merely guilty of a *non distributio medii*<sup>2</sup> in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked. "There are two brothers, I know, and both have attained reputation in letters. The Minister, I believe, has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathematician and no poet."

"You are mistaken, I know him well; he is both. As poet *and* mathematician he would reason well, as mere mathematician he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the Prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long been regarded as *the reason par excellence*."

"*Il y a à parler*," replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, "*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenu au plus grand nombre*."<sup>1</sup> The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception; but if a term is of any importance—if words derive any value from applicability—then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra,' about as much as, in Latin, '*ambitus*' implies 'ambition,' '*religio*,' 'religion,' or '*homines honesti*,' a set of honorable men."<sup>2</sup>

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with some of the algebraists of Paris, but proceed."

"I dispute the availability, and thus the value of that reason which is cultivated in any especial form other than the abstractly logical. I dispute, in particular, the reason deduced by mathematical study. The mathematics are the science of form and quantity; mathematical reasoning is merely logic applied to observation upon form and quantity. The great error lies in supposing that even the truths of what is called *pure* algebra are abstract or general truths. And this error is so egregious that I am confounded at the universality with which it has been received. Mathematical axioms are *not* axioms of general truth. What is true of *relation*—of form and quantity—is often grossly false in regard to morals, for example. In this latter science it is very usually untrue that the aggregated parts are equal to the whole. In chemistry, also, the axiom fails. In the consideration of motive it fails; for two

<sup>1</sup> hidden, to be sought out with care    <sup>2</sup> a term used in logic to mean an undistributed middle of a syllogism, thus leading to a wrong conclusion

<sup>1</sup> "It is safe to bet that every common notion, every received convention, is nonsense since it has found favor with the majority."    <sup>2</sup> The general point of this discussion is that the derivatives of a word do not necessarily include its original meaning



motives, each of a given value, have not, necessarily, a value when united equal to the sum of their values apart. There are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*. But the mathematician argues, from his *finite truths*, through habit, as if they were of an absolutely general applicability—as the world indeed imagines them to be. Bryant, in his very learned 'Mythology,' mentions an analogous source of error, when he says that 'although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually, and make inferences from them as existing realities.' With the algebraists, however, who are Pagans themselves, the 'Pagan fables' are believed and the inferences are made, not so much through lapse of memory as through an unaccountable adding of the brains. In short I never yet encountered the mere mathematician who could be trusted out of equal roots, or one who did not clandestinely hold it as a point of his faith that  $x^2 + px$  was absolutely and unconditionally equal to  $q$ . Say to one of these gentlemen, by way of experiment, if you please, that you believe occasions may occur where  $x^2 + px$  is not altogether equal to  $q$ , and, having made him understand what you mean, get out of his reach as speedily as convenient, for, beyond doubt, he will endeavor to knock you down.

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, while I merely laughed at his last observations, "that if the Minister had been no more than a mathematician, the Prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this check. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him as courtier, too, and as a bold *intriguer*.<sup>1</sup> Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary policial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the Prefect as certain aids to

his success, I regarded only as ruses, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G——, in fact, did finally arrive,—the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises I felt, also, that the whole train of thought, which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt that this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the Minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary *tricks* of concealment. He could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his Hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gumlets, and to the microscopes of the Prefect. I saw, in fine, that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to *simplicity*, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the Prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so very self-evident."

"Yes," said I, "I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions."

"The material world," continued Dupin, "abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial, and thus some color of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma, that metaphor, or simile, may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertia*,<sup>1</sup> for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent momentum is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again: have you ever

<sup>1</sup> "intriguer"

<sup>1</sup> "force of inertia"

noticed which of the street signs over the shop doors are the most attractive of attention?"

"I have never given the matter a thought," I said.

"There is a game of puzzles," he resumed, "which is played upon a map. One party playing requires another to find a given word,—the name of town, river, state, or empire,—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names, but the adept selects such words as stretch in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious, and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the Prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the Minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it.

"But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D——, upon the fact that the document must always have been *at hand*, if he intended to use it to good purpose, and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the Prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits of that dignitary's ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the Minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

"Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the Ministerial Hotel. I found D—— at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of *ennui*.<sup>1</sup> He is, perhaps, the most really energetic

human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

"To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the whole apartment, while seemingly intent only upon the conversation of my host.

"I paid especial attention to a large writing-table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

"At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery filigree card-rack of pasteboard, that hung, dangling, by a dirty blue ribbon, from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the mantelpiece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless had been altered, or stayed, in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D—— cipher very conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand, 'to D——, the Minister himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously, into one of the upper divisions of the rack.

"No sooner had I glanced at this letter than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure, it was, to all appearance, radically different from the one of which the Prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D—— cipher; there it was small and red, with the ducal arms of the S—— family. Here, the address, to the Minister, was diminutive and feminine; there, the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided; the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then, the *radicalness* of these differences, which was excessive, the dirt; the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the *true* methodical habits of D——, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder

<sup>1</sup> "boredom"

into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyper-obtrusive situation of this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived, these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion, in one who came with the intention to suspect

"I protracted my visit as long as possible, and while I maintained a most animated discussion with the Minister, upon a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really riveted upon the letter. In this examination, I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack, and also fell, at length, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper, I observed them to be more *chafed* than seemed necessary. They presented the *broken* appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is refolded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned, as a glove, inside out, re-directed, and re-sealed. I bade the Minister good-morning, and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuffbox upon the table

"The next morning I called for the snuffbox, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the Hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a terrified mob. D—— rushed to a case-ment, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a facsimile (so far as regards externals) which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings—imitating the D—— cipher very readily by means of a seal formed of bread.

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behavior of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was

suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D—— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a facsimile? Would it not have been better, at the first visit, to have seized it openly and departed?"

"D——," replied Dupin, "is a desperate man, and a man of nerve. His Hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interest. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest, I might never have left the Ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the Minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers—since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself at once to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the *facilis descensus Avernus*,<sup>1</sup> but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance I have no sympathy—at least no pity—for him who descends. He is that *monstrum horrendum*,<sup>2</sup> an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the Prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack "

"How? Did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why—it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting D——, at Vienna once, did me an evil turn, which I told him, quite good-humoredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard

<sup>1</sup> "Easy is the descent into Avernus," the infernal regions. A much quoted passage from the *Aeneid*, VI, 126    <sup>2</sup> "dreadful monster."

to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give him a clue. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the words.—

‘—— Un dessein si funeste,  
S'il n'est digne d'Atreé, est digne de Thyeste.’<sup>1</sup>

They are to be found in Crébillon's *Atreé*.”

1845 10

### HAWTHORNE'S "TWICE-TOLD TALES"

This review of the second edition of *Twice-Told Tales* was first published in *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842. Poe was among the first to see Hawthorne's genius. The article, much more than a review, is an aesthetic treatise embodying the ideas of literary art that rule in Poe's own crea- 20  
tions. It sets forth especially his views on the short story. Poe's contemporaries rated his critical articles, book reviews and essays, more highly than his fiction and verse.

We said a few hurried words about Mr. Hawthorne in our last number, with the design of speaking more fully in the present. We are still, however, pressed for room, and must necessarily discuss his volumes more briefly and more at random than their high 30 merits deserve.

The book professes to be a collection of *tales*, yet is, in two respects, misnamed. These pieces are now in their third republication, and, of course, are thrice-told. Moreover, they are by no means *all* tales either in the ordinary or in the legitimate understanding of the term. Many of them are pure essays; for example, "Sights from a Steeple," "Sunday at Home," "Little Anne's Ramble," "A Rill 40 from the Town Pump," "The Toll-Gatherer's Day," "The Haunted Mind," "The Sister Years," "Snow-Flakes," "Night Sketches," and "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore." We mention these matters chiefly on account of *their discrepancy with that marked precision* and finish by which the body of the work is distinguished.

Of the essays just named, we must be con-

<sup>1</sup> "A design so fatal, if it is not worthy of Atreus, is 50  
worthy of Thyestes."

tent to speak in brief. They are each and all beautiful, without being characterized by the polish and adaptation so visible in the tales proper. A painter would at once note their leading or predominant feature, and style it *repose*. There is no attempt at effect. All is quiet, thoughtful, subdued. Yet this repose may exist simultaneously with high originality of thought; and Mr. Hawthorne has dem-

onstrated the fact. At every turn we meet with novel combinations, yet these combinations never surpass the limits of the quiet. We are soothed as we read; and withal is a calm astonishment that ideas so apparently obvious have never occurred or been presented to us before. Herein our author differs materially from Lamb or Hunt or Hazlitt—who, with vivid originality of manner and expression, have less of the true novelty of thought than is generally supposed, and whose originality, at best, has an uneasy and meretricious quaintness, replete with startling effects unfounded in nature, and inducing trains of reflection which lead to no satisfactory result. The *Essays* of Hawthorne have much of the character of Irving, with more of originality, and less of finish, while, compared with the *Spectator*, they have a vast superiority at all points. The *Spectator*, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Hawthorne have in common that tranquil and subdued manner which we have chosen to denominate *repose*; but, in the case of the two former, this repose is attained rather by the absence of novel combination, or of originality, than otherwise, and consists chiefly in the calm, quiet, unostentatious expression of commonplace thoughts, in an unambitious, unadulterated Saxon. In them, by strong effort, we are made to conceive the absence of 40 all. In the essays before us the absence of effort is too obvious to be mistaken, and a strong undercurrent of *suggestion* runs continuously beneath the upper stream of the tranquil thesis. In short, these effusions of Mr. Hawthorne are the product of a truly *imaginative intellect, restrained, and in some measure repressed, by fastidiousness of taste, by constitutional melancholy, and by indolence*.

But it is of his tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our

opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. Thus latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem too brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Béranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all imitative bodies, they lack *momentum*, and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*<sup>1</sup>

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfill the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of

exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed. and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem, but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poem's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or ex-

<sup>1</sup> "You will go most safely in the middle."

pression which have their basis in *Truth*. But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—(the ratiocinative, for example, the sarcastic, or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts, we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added here, *par parenthèse*, that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at a great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in the poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect*, many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of *Blackwood*. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable.

We have very few American tales of real merit—we may say, indeed, none, with the exception of *The Tales of a Traveler* of Washington Irving, and these *Twice-Told Tales* of Mr. Hawthorne. Some of the pieces of Mr. John Neal abound in vigor and originality; but, in general, his compositions of this class are excessively diffuse, extravagant, and indicative of an imperfect sentiment of Art. Articles at random are, now and then, met with in our periodicals which might be advantageously compared with the best effusions of the British Magazines; but, upon

the whole, we are far behind our progenitors in this department of literature.

Of Mr. Hawthorne's Tales we would say emphatically, that they belong to the highest region of Art—an Art subservient to genius of a very lofty order. We had supposed, with good reason for so supposing, that he had been thrust into his present position by one of the impudent *cliques* which beset our literature, and whose pretensions it is our full purpose to expose at the earliest opportunity; but we have been most agreeably mistaken. We know of few compositions which the critic can more honestly commend than these *Twice-Told Tales*. As Americans, we feel proud of the book.

Mr Hawthorne's distinctive trait is invention, creation, imagination, originality—a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest. But the nature of the originality, so far as regards its manifestation in letters, is but imperfectly understood. The inventive or original mind as frequently displays itself in novelty of *tone* as in novelty of matter. Mr. Hawthorne is original at *all* points.

It would be a matter of some difficulty to designate the best of these tales; we repeat that, without exception, they are beautiful. "Wakefield" is remarkable for the skill with which an old idea—a well-known incident—is worked up or discussed. A man of whims conceives the purpose of quitting his wife and residing *incognito*, for twenty years, in her immediate neighborhood. Something of this kind actually happened in London. The force of Mr. Hawthorne's tale lies in the analysis of the motives which must or might have impelled the husband to such folly, in the first instance, with the possible causes of his perseverance. Upon this thesis a sketch of singular power has been constructed.

"The Wedding Knell" is full of the boldest imagination—an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most capricious critic could find no flaw in this production.

"The Minister's Black Veil" is a masterly composition, of which the sole defect is that to the rabble its exquisite skill will be *cavare*. The obvious meaning of this article will be found to smother its insinuated one. The *moral*

put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the *true* import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the "young lady") has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive.

"Mr Higginbotham's Catastrophe" is vividly original, and managed most dexterously.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is exceedingly well imagined, and executed with surpassing ability. The artist breathes in every line of it.

"The White Old Maid" is objectionable even more than the "Minister's Black Veil," on the score of its mysticism. Even with the thoughtful and analytic, there will be much trouble in penetrating its entire import.

"The Hollow of the Three Hills" we would quote in full had we space,—not as evincing higher talent than any of the other pieces, but as affording an excellent example of the author's peculiar ability. The subject is commonplace. A witch subjects the Distant and the Past to the view of a mourner. It has been the fashion to describe, in such cases, a mirror in which the images of the absent appear; or a cloud of smoke is made to arise, and thence the figures are gradually unfolded. Mr. Hawthorne has wonderfully heightened his effect by making the ear, in place of the eye, the medium by which the fantasy is conveyed. The head of the mourner is enveloped in the cloak of the witch, and within its magic folds there arise sounds which have an all-sufficient intelligence. Throughout this article also, the artist is conspicuous—not more in positive than in negative merits. Not only is all done that should be done, but (what perhaps is an end with more difficulty attained) there is nothing done which should not be. Every word tells, and there is not a word which does not tell.

In "Howe's Masquerade" we observe something which resembles plagiarism—but which may be a very flattering coincidence of thought. We quote the passage in question

"With a dark flush of wrath upon his brow, they saw the General draw his sword and advance to meet the figure in the cloak before the latter had stepped one pace upon the floor. 'Villain, unmuffle yourself,' cried he. 'You pass

no farther!" The figure, without blenching a hair's breadth from the sword which was pointed at his breast, made a solemn pause, and lowered the cape of the cloak from about his face, yet not sufficiently for the spectators to catch a glimpse of it. But Sir William Howe had evidently seen enough. The sternness of his countenance gave place to a look of wild amazement, if not horror, while he recoiled several steps from the figure, and let fall his sword upon the floor."

The idea here is, that the figure in the cloak is the phantom or reduplication of Sir William Howe, but in an article called "William Wilson," one of the *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, we have not only the same idea, but the same idea similarly presented in several respects. We quote two paragraphs, which our readers may compare with what has been already given. We have italicized, above, the immediate particulars of resemblance.

"The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangement at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror, it appeared to me, now stood where none had been perceptible before and as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced with a feeble and tottering gait to meet me. Thus it appeared I say, but was not. It was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of dissolution. Not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of that face which was not even identically mine own. *His mask and cloak lay where he had thrown them, upon the floor*"

Here it will be observed that, not only are the two general conceptions identical, but there are various points of similarity. In each case the figure seen is the wrath or duplication of the beholder. In each case the scene is a masquerade. In each case the figure is cloaked. In each, there is a quarrel—that is to say, angry words pass between the parties. In each the beholder is enraged. In each the cloak and sword fall upon the floor. The "villain, unmuffle yourself," of Mr. H. is precisely paralleled by a passage at page 56 of "William Wilson."

In the way of objection we have scarcely a word to say of these tales. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too general or prevalent *tone*—a tone of melancholy and mysticism. The subjects are insufficiently varied. There is not so much of *versatility* evinced as we might well be warranted in expecting from the high powers of Mr Hawthorne. But beyond these trivial exceptions we have really none to make. The style is purity itself. Force abounds. High imagination gleams from every page. Mr Hawthorne is a man of the truest genius. We only regret that the limits of our Magazine will not permit us to pay him that full tribute of commendation, which, under other circumstances, we should be so eager to pay

1842

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF COM- POSITION

Published in *Graham's Magazine*, April, 1846. Poe called this essay "my best specimen of analysis." Another contribution to æsthetic theory, it illustrates his critical development and his poetic ideas. Especially, it sets forth his method of composing "The Raven" (see headnote on that poem). An excellent discussion of the essay may be found in the *Craig-Alberton Poe*, lx-lxv.

CHARLES DICKENS, in a note now lying before me, alluding to an examination I once made of the mechanism of *Barnaby Rudge*, says—"By the way, are you aware that Godwin wrote his *Caleb Williams* backward? He first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what had been done."

I cannot think this the *precise* mode of procedure on the part of Godwin—and indeed what he himself acknowledges, is not altogether in accordance with Mr Dickens's idea—but the author of *Caleb Williams* was too good an artist not to perceive the advantage derivable from at least a somewhat similar process. Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen. It is only with the *dénouement* constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causa-

tion, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention.

There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis—or one is suggested by an incident of the day—or, at best, the author sets himself to work in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative—designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or autorial comment, whatever crevices of fact, or action, may, from page to page, render themselves apparent.

I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect*. Keeping originality *always* in view—for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so easily attainable a source of interest—I say to myself, in the first place, "Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?" Having chosen a novel, first, and secondly a vivid effect, I consider whether it can be best wrought by incident or tone—whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone—afterward looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of event, or tone, as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would—that is to say who could—detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion. Why such a paper has never been given to the world, I am much at a loss to say—but, perhaps, the autorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought—at the true purposes seized only at the last moment—at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived



not at the maturity of full view—at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable—at the cautious selections and rejections—at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions—the tackle for scene-shifting—the step-ladders and demon-traps—the cock's feathers, the red paint, and the black patches, which, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary *hustler*. 10

I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common, in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. In general, suggestions, having arisen pell-mell, are pursued and forgotten in a similar manner.

For my own part, I have neither sympathy with the repugnance alluded to, nor at any time the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions; and, since the interest of an analysis, or reconstruction, such as I have considered a *dendendum*, is quite independent of any real or fancied interest in the thing analyzed, it will not be regarded as a breach of decorum on my part to show the *modus operandi*<sup>1</sup> by which some one of my own works was put together. I select *The Raven*, as most generally known. It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referrible either to accident or intuition—that the work proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem. 30

Let us dismiss, as irrelevant to the poem, *per se*, the circumstance—or say the necessity—which, in the first place, gave rise to the intention of composing a poem that should suit at once the popular and the critical taste. 40

We commence, then, with this intention

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression—for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and every thing like totality is at once destroyed. But since, *ceteris paribus*,<sup>2</sup> no poet can

afford to dispense with *any thing* that may advance his design, it but remains to be seen whether there is, in extent, any advantage to counterbalance the loss of unity which attends it. Here I say no, at once. What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul, and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. For this reason, at least one half of the *Paradise Lost* is essentially prose—a succession of poetical excitements interspersed, *inevitably*, with corresponding depressions—the whole being deprived, through the extremeness of its length, of the vastly important artistic element, totality, or unity, of effect.

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting—and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as *Robinson Crusoe* (demanding no unity) this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit—in other words, to the excitement or elevation—again in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing, for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect—thus, with one proviso—that a certain degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular, while not below the critical, taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem—a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed; and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which,

<sup>1</sup> "method of working"    <sup>2</sup> "other things being equal"

with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration—the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. A few words, however, in elucidation of my real meaning, which some of my friends have evinced a disposition to misrepresent. That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men  
 10 speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect—they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of soul—not of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating “the beautiful.” Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem, merely because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring from direct causes—  
 20 that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation alluded to is *most readily* attained in the poem. Now the object, Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable, to a certain extent, in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Pas-  
 30 sion a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul. It by no means follows from any thing here said, that passion, or even truth, may not be introduced, and even profitably introduced, into a poem—for they may serve in elucidation, or aid the general effect, as do discords in music, by contrast—but the true  
 40 artist will always contrive, first, to tone them into proper subservience to the predominant aim, and, secondly, to enveil them, as far as possible, in that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem.

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation—and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness*. Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme develop-  
 50 ment, invariably excites the sensitive soul to

tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction, with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem—some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking  
 over all the usual artistic effects—or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value, and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As  
 commonly used, the *refrain*, or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone—both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity—of repetition I resolved to diversify, and so heighten, the effect, by adhering, in general, to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought. That is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the  
 30 variation of the *application* of the refrain—the refrain itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the *nature* of my refrain. Since its application was to be repeatedly varied, it was clear that the refrain itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence, would, of course, be the facility of the variation. Thus led me at once to a single word as the best refrain.

The question now arose as to the *character* of the word. Having made up my mind to a refrain, the division of the poem into stanzas was, of course, a corollary: the refrain forming the close of each stanza. That such a close, to have force, must be sonorous and susceptible of protracted emphasis, admitted no doubt, and these considerations inevitably led me to

the long *o* as the most sonorous vowel, in connection with *r* as the most producible consonant.

The sound of the refrain being thus determined, it became necessary to select a word embodying this sound, and at the same time in the fullest possible keeping with that melancholy which I had predetermined as the tone of the poem. In such a search it would have been absolutely impossible to overlook the word "Nevermore." In fact, it was the very first which presented itself.

The next *desideratum* was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "Nevermore." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by a *human* being—I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately arose the idea of a *non-reasoning* creature capable of speech, and, very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven, as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended *tone*.

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven—the bird of ill omen—monotonously repeating the one word, "Nevermore" at the conclusion of each stanza, in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object *supremeness*, or perfection, at all points, I asked myself—"Of all melancholy topics, what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" "Death"—was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length, the answer, here also, is obvious—"When it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*." The death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover.

I had now to combine the two ideas, of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress, and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore." I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying, at every turn, the *application* of the word repeated; but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending—that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application*. I saw that I could make the first query propounded by the lover—the first query to which the Raven should reply "Nevermore"—that I could make this first query a commonplace one—the second less so—the third still less, and so on—until at length the lover, startled from his original *nonchalance* by the melancholy character of the word itself—by its frequent repetition—and by a consideration of the ominous reputation of the fowl that uttered it—is at length excited to superstition, and wildly propounds queries of a far different character—queries whose solution he has passionately at heart—propounds them half in superstition and half in that species of despair which delights in self-torture—propounds them not altogether because he believes in the prophetic or demoniac character of the bird (which, reason assures him, is merely repeating a lesson learned by rote) but because he experiences a phrenzied pleasure in so modeling his questions as to receive from the *expected* "Nevermore" the most delicious because the most intolerable of sorrow. Perceiving the opportunity thus afforded me—or, more strictly, thus forced upon me in the progress of the construction—I first established in mind the climax, or concluding query—that query to which "Nevermore" should be in the last place an answer—that in reply to which this word "Nevermore" should involve the utmost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

Here then the poem may be said to have its beginning—at the end, where all works of art should begin—for it was here, at this point of my preconsiderations, that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza.

"Prophet," said I, "thing of evil prophet still  
 if bird or devil  
 By that heaven that bends above us—by that  
 God we both adore,  
 Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the  
 distant Aidenn,  
 It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the  
 angels name Lenore—  
 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the  
 angels name Lenore"  
 Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore"

I composed this stanza, at this point, first, that by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover, and secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the meter, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza, —as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. Had I been able, in the subsequent composition, to construct more vigorous stanzas, I should, without scruple, have purposely enfeebled them, so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect.

And here I may as well say a few words of the versification. My first object (as usual) was originality. The extent to which this has been neglected, in versification, is one of the most unaccountable things in the world. Admitting that there is little possibility of variety in mere *rhythm*, it is still clear that the possible varieties of meter and stanza are absolutely infinite—and yet, *for centuries, no man, in verse, has ever done, or ever seemed to think of doing, an original thing*. The fact is, that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation.

Of course, I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or meter of *The Raven*. The former is trochaic—the latter is octometer acatalectic, alternating with heptameter catalectic repeated in the refrain of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrameter catalectic. Less pedantically—the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable fol-

lowed by a short: the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet—the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds)—the third of eight—the fourth of seven and a half—the fifth the same—the sixth three and a half. Now, each of these lines, taken individually, has been employed before, and what originality *The Raven* has, is in their combination into stanza, nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual, and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale*. For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident—it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished—this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first, to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage—at being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird—the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, *Pallas*, itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic—approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible—is given to the Raven's entrance. He comes in "with many a flirt and flutter."

Not the *least* obsequance made he—not a moment stopped or stayed he,  
But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.

In the two stanzas which follow, the design is more obviously carried out—

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven thou,"

I said, "art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the nightly shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore"

Much I marvelled *this ungainly fowl* to hear discourse so plainly

Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore,

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,

With such name as "Nevermore"

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness—this tone commencing in the stanza directly following the one last quoted, with the line,

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only, etc.

From this epoch the lover no longer jests—no longer sees any thing even of the fantastic in the Raven's demeanor. He speaks of him as a "grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore," and feels the "fiery eyes" burning into his "bosom's core." This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part, is intended to induce a similar one on the part of the reader—to bring the mind into a proper frame for the *dénouement*—which is now brought about as rapidly and as *directly* as possible.

With the *dénouement* proper—with the Raven's reply, "Nevermore," to the lover's final demand if he shall meet his mistress in another world—the poem, in its obvious phase, that of a simple narrative, may be said to have its completion. So far, every thing is within the limits of the accountable—of the real. A raven, having learned by rote the single word "Nevermore," and having escaped from the custody of its owner, is driven at midnight, through the violence of a storm, to seek admission at a window from which a light still gleams—the chamber-window of a student, occupied half in poring over a volume, half in dreaming of a beloved mistress deceased. The casement being thrown open at the fluttering of the bird's wings, the bird itself perches on the most convenient seat out of the immediate reach of the student, who, amused by the incident and the oddity of the visitor's demeanor, demands of it, in jest and without looking for a reply, its name. The raven addressed, answers with its customary word, "Nevermore"—a word which finds immediate echo in the melancholy heart of the student, who, giving utterance aloud to certain thoughts suggested by the occasion, is again startled by the fowl's repetition of "Nevermore." The student now guesses the state of the case, but is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the extreme,

of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skilfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some under-current, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with the *ideal*. It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem—their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. The undercurrent of meaning is rendered first apparent in the lines—

"Take thy beak from out *my heart*, and take  
thy form from off *my door!*"  
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore!"

It will be observed that the words, "from out my heart," involve the first metaphorical expression in the poem. They, with the answer, "Nevermore," dispose the mind to seek a moral in all that has been previously narrated. The reader begins now to regard the Raven as emblematical—but it is not until the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him emblematical of *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* is permuted distinctly to be seen:

And the Raven, never fitting, still is sitting,  
still is sitting,  
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my  
chamber door,  
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's  
that is dreaming,

And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws  
his shadow on the floor;  
And my soul from out that shadow that lies  
floating on the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore.

\* 1846

### From EUREKA

In this scientific-philosophical essay, with its gigantic speculations, Poe worked out intuitively what he believed to be the law of ordered harmony governing the universe. Deeply interested in the study of the Newtonian theory of astronomy, based on the law of gravitation, he thought Newton's application of principles too physical when it should be metaphysical. He sees in all aspects of the material universe and of life the manifestation of a single plan. A letter to G. W. Eveleth, February 29, 1849, gives Poe's summary of his lecture on the universe, and this well presents the sequences of thought in *Eureka*. For the best discussion of the essay see the Craig-Alterton *Poe*, xxxv-xli and 545-552. See also G. Norstedt, "Poe and Einstein," *Open Court*, XLIV, 173-180. Norstedt wrote, "He [Poe] certainly anticipated some of the discoveries of the new physics as to the extent and shape of the universe."

RECURRING, then, to a previous suggestion, let us understand the systems—let us understand each star, with its attendant planets—as but a Titanic atom existing in space with precisely the same inclination for Unity which characterized, in the beginning, the actual atoms after their irradiation throughout the Universal sphere. As these original atoms rushed towards each other in generally straight lines, so let us conceive as at least generally rectilinear, the paths of the system-atoms towards their respective centers of aggregation—and in this direct drawing together of the systems into clusters, with a similar and simultaneous drawing together of the clusters themselves while undergoing consolidation, we have at length attained the great *Now*—the awful Present—the Existing Condition of the Universe.

Of the still more awful Future a not irrational analogy may guide us in framing an hypothesis. The equilibrium between the centripetal and centrifugal forces of each system, being necessarily destroyed upon

attainment of a certain proximity to the nucleus of the cluster to which it belongs, there must occur, at once, a chaotic or seemingly chaotic precipitation, of the moons upon the planets, of the planets upon the suns, and of the suns upon the nuclei, and the general result of this precipitation must be the gathering of the myriad now-existing stars of the firmament into an almost infinitely less number of almost infinitely superior spheres. In being immeasurably fewer, the worlds of that day will be immeasurably greater than our own. Then, indeed, amid unfathomable abysses, will be glaring unimaginable suns. But all this will be merely a climactic magnificence foreboding the great End. Of this End, the new genesis described can be but a very partial postponement. While undergoing consolidation, the clusters themselves, with a speed prodigiously accumulative, have been rushing towards their own general center—and now, with a thousand-fold electric velocity, commensurate only with their material grandeur and with the spiritual passion of their appetite for oneness, the majestic remnants of the tribe of Stars flash, at length, into a common embrace. The inevitable catastrophe is at hand.

But this catastrophe—what is it? We have seen accomplished the ingathering of the orbs. Henceforward, are we not to understand *one material globe of globes* as constituting and comprehending the Universe? Such a fancy would be altogether at war with every assumption and consideration of this Discourse.

I have already alluded to that absolute *reciprocity of adaptation* which is the idiosyncrasy of the divine Art—stamping it divine. Up to this point of our reflections, we have been regarding the electrical influence as a something by dint of whose repulsion alone Matter is enabled to exist in that state of diffusion demanded for the fulfilment of its purposes—so far, in a word, we have been considering the influence in question as ordained for Matter's sake to subserve the objects of Matter. With a perfectly legitimate reciprocity, we are now permitted to look at Matter, as created *solely for the sake of this influence*—solely to serve the objects of this spiritual Ether. Through the aid—by the

means—through the agency of Matter, and by dint of its heterogeneity—is thus Ether manifested—is *Spirit individualized*. It is merely in the development of this Ether, through heterogeneity, that particular masses of Matter become animate—sensitive—and in the ratio of their heterogeneity,—some reaching a degree of sensitiveness involving what we call *Thought*, and thus attaining Conscious Intelligence.

In this view, we are enabled to perceive Matter as a Means—not as an End. Its purposes are thus seen to have been comprehended in its diffusion, and with the return into Unity these purposes cease. The absolutely consolidated globe of globes would be *objectless*—therefore not for a moment could it continue to exist. Matter, created for an end, would unquestionably, on fulfilment of that end, be Matter no longer. Let us endeavor to understand that it would disappear, and that God would remain all in all.

That every work of Divine conception must coexist and coexpire with its particular design, seems to me especially obvious, and I made no doubt that, on perceiving the final globe of globes to be *objectless*, the majority of my readers will be satisfied with my “*therefore it cannot continue to exist*.” Nevertheless, as the startling thought of its instantaneous disappearance is one which the most powerful intellect cannot be expected readily to entertain on grounds so decidedly abstract, let us endeavor to look at the idea from some other and more ordinary point of view—let us see how thoroughly and beautifully it is corroborated in an *a posteriori* consideration of Matter as we actually find it.

I have before said that “Attraction and Repulsion being undeniably the sole properties by which Matter is manifested to Mind, we are justified in assuming that Matter *exists* only as Attraction and Repulsion—in other words that Attraction and Repulsion *are* Matter, there being no conceivable case in which we may not employ the term ‘Matter’ and the terms ‘Attraction’ and ‘Repulsion’ taken together, as equivalent, and therefore convertible, expressions of Logic.”

Now the very definition of Attraction implies particularly—the existence of parts, particles, or atoms, for we define it as the

tendency of "each atom, &c., to every other atom," &c., according to a certain law. Of course where there are *no parts*—where there is absolute Unity—where the tendency to oneness is satisfied—there can be no Attraction—this has been fully shown, and all Philosophy admits it. When, on fulfilment of its purposes, then, Matter shall have returned into its original condition of *One*—a condition which presupposes the expulsion of the separative Ether, whose province and whose capacity are limited to keeping the atoms apart until that great day when, this Ether being no longer needed, the overwhelming pressure of the finally collective Attraction shall at length just sufficiently predominate<sup>1</sup> and expel it—when, I say, Matter, finally, expelling the Ether, shall have returned into absolute Unity,—it will then (to speak paradoxically for the moment) be Matter without Attraction and without Repulsion—in other words, Matter without Matter—in other words, again, *Matter no more*. In sinking into Unity, it will sink at once into that Nothingness which, to all Finite Perception, Unity must be—into that Material Nihilism from which alone we can conceive it to have been evoked—to have been *created* by the Volition of God

I repeat, then—Let us endeavor to comprehend that the final globe of globes will instantaneously disappear, and that God will remain all in all

But are we here to pause? Not so. On the Universal agglomeration and dissolution, we can readily conceive that a new and perhaps totally different series of conditions may ensue—another creation and irradiation, returning into itself—another action and reaction of the Divine Will Guiding our imaginations by that omnipotent law of laws, the law of periodicity, are we not, indeed, more than justified in entertaining a belief—let us say, rather, in indulging a hope—that the processes we have here ventured to contemplate will be renewed forever, and forever, and forever, a novel Universe swelling into existence, and then subsiding into nothingness, at every throb of the Heart Divine?

<sup>1</sup> "Gravity, therefore, must be the strongest of forces." [Poe's note]

And now—this Heart Divine—what is it? *It is our own.*

Let not the merely seeming irreverence of this idea frighten our souls from that cool exercise of consciousness—from that deep tranquillity of self-inspection—through which alone we can hope to attain the presence of this, the most sublime of truths, and look it leisurely in the face

10 The *phaenomena* on which our conclusions must at this point depend, are merely spiritual shadows, but not the less thoroughly substantial.

We walk about, amid the destinies of our world-existence, encompassed by dim but ever present *Memories* of a Destiny more vast—very distant in the bygone time, and infinitely awful. We live out a Youth peculiarly haunted by such dreams, yet never mistaking them for dreams. As *Memories we know them.* 20 *During our Youth* the distinction is too clear to deceive us even for a moment.

So long as this Youth endures, the feeling *that we exist*, is the most natural of all feelings. We understand it *thoroughly*. That there was a period at which we did *not* exist—or, that it might so have happened that we never had existed at all—are the considerations, indeed, which *during this Youth*, we find difficulty in understanding. Why we should *not* exist, 30 is, up to the epoch of our *Manhood*, of all queries the most unanswerable. Existence—self-existence—existence from all Time and to all Eternity—seems, up to the epoch of *Manhood*, a normal and unquestionable condition,—*seems, because it is.*

But now comes the period at which a conventional World-Reason awakens us from the truth of our dreams. Doubt, Surprise and Incomprehensibility arrive at the same moment. They say—"You live, and the time was when you lived not. You have been created. An Intelligence exists greater than your own, and it is only through this Intelligence you live at all." These things we struggle to comprehend and cannot,—*cannot*, because these things, being untrue, are thus, of necessity, incomprehensible.

No thinking being lives who, at some luminous point of his life of thought, has not felt himself lost amid the surges of futile



efforts at understanding or believing, that anything exists *greater than his own soul*. The utter impossibility of any one's soul feeling itself inferior to another; the intense, overwhelming dissatisfaction and rebellion at the thought;—these, with the omniprevalent aspirations at perfection, are but the spiritual, coincident with the material, struggles towards the original Unity—are, to my mind at least, a species of proof far surpassing what Man terms demonstration, that no one soul is inferior to another—that nothing is, or can be, superior to any one soul—that each soul is, in part, its own God—its own Creator—in a word, that God—the material and spiritual God—*now* exists solely in the diffused Matter and Spirit of the Universe, and that the regathering of this diffused Matter and Spirit will be but the reconstitution of the *purely* Spiritual and Individual God.

In this view, and in this view alone, we comprehend the riddles of Divine Injustice—or Inexorable Fate. In this view alone the existence of Evil becomes intelligible, but in this view it becomes more—it becomes endurable. Our souls no longer rebel at a *Sorrow* which we ourselves have imposed upon ourselves, in furtherance of our own purposes—with a view—if even with a futile view—to the extension of our own *Joy*.

I have spoken of Memories that haunt us during our youth. They sometimes pursue us even in our Manhood—assume gradually less and less indefinite shapes—now and then speak to us with low voices, saying

“There was an epoch in the Night of Time, when a still-existent Being existed—one of an absolutely infinite number of similar Beings that people the absolutely infinite domains of the absolutely infinite space. It was not and is not in the power of this Being—any more than it is in your own—to extend, by actual increase, the joy of his Existence, but just as it is in your power to expand or to concentrate your pleasures (the absolute amount of happiness remaining always the same) so did and does a similar capability appertain to this Divine Being, who thus passes his Eternity in perpetual variation of Concentrated Self and almost Infinite Self-Diffusion. What you call The Universe is but his present expansive exist-

ence. He now feels his life through an infinity of imperfect pleasures—the partial and pain-intertangled pleasures of those inconceivably numerous things which you designate as his creatures, but which are really but infinite individualizations of Himself. All these creatures—all—those which you term animate, as well as those to whom you deny life for no better reason than that you do not behold it in operation—all these creatures have, in a greater or less degree, a capacity for pleasure and for pain—but the general sum of their sensations is precisely that amount of Happiness which appertains by right to the Divine Being when concentrated within Himself. These creatures are all, too, more or less conscious Intelligences, conscious, first, of a proper identity, conscious, secondly, and by faint indeterminate glimpses, of an identity with the Divine Being of whom we speak—of an identity with God. Of the two classes of consciousness, fancy that the former will grow weaker, the latter stronger, during the long succession of ages which must elapse before these myriads of individual Intelligences become blended—into One. Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness—that Man, for example, ceasing imperceptibly to feel himself Man, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch when he shall recognize his existence as that of Jehovah. In the meantime bear in mind that all is Life—Life—Life within Life—the less within the greater, and all within the *Spirit Divine*.

1849

#### From THE POETIC PRINCIPLE

Printed in the *Home Journal*, August 31, 1850, after Poe's death. This was originally prepared as a lecture and is a restatement and explanation of his theories of poetry.

In speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing very much at random the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most

definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags—fades—a revulsion ensues—and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the *Paradise Lost* is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity—its totality of effect or impression—we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire, but if, upon completing the work, we read it again, omitting the first book—that is to say, commencing with the second—we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned—that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity.—and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the *Iliad*, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason for be-

lieving it intended as a series of lyrics, but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of art. The modern epic is, of the supposititious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blind-fold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem were popular in reality—which I doubt—it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd—yet we are indebted for it to the Quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered—there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does* impress us with a sense of the sublime—but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even *The Columbiad*. Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. *As yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollok by the pound—but what else are we to *infer* from their continued prating about "sustained effort"? If, by "sustained effort," any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort—if this indeed be a thing commendable—but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort's account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of art rather by the impression it makes, by the effect it produces, than by the time it took to impress the effect, or by the amount of "sustained effort" which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing, and genius quite another; nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By and by, this proposition, with many which I have just been urging, will be received as self-evident. In the mean time, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem

may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A very short poem, while now and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring, but in general they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention, and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind. . . .

To recapitulate, then.—I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth

A few words, however, in explanation. That pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find, it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement, of the soul, which we recognize as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore—using the word as inclusive of the sublime—I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes:—no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least most readily attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, however, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve, incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work—but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem. . . .

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavored to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is strictly and simply the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in an elevating excitement of the Soul, quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart, or of that Truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For in regard to Passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary—Love—the true, the divine Eros<sup>1</sup>—the Uranian as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus—is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth—if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience at once the true poetical effect—but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognizes the ambrosia which nourishes his soul in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven—in the volutes of the flower—in the clustering of low shrub-beries—in the waving of the grain-fields—in the slanting of tall Eastern trees—in the blue distance of mountains—in the grouping of clouds—in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks—in the gleaming of silver rivers—in the repose of sequestered lakes—in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds—in the harp of Æolus—in the sighing of the night-wind—in the repining voice of the forest—in the

<sup>1</sup> Eros, or Cupid, god of love, stands here for celestial love. According to an ancient tradition, Venus was the daughter of Jupiter and Dione. According to a second and later tradition she arose from the sea, after the wounding of Uranus, personification of heaven and father of the Titans, Furies, etc., and was therefore called by the Greeks Aphrodite or "foam-born." Plainly Poe has in mind here to distinguish between divine and earthly love.

surf that complains to the shore—in the fresh breath of the woods—in the scent of the violet—in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth—in the suggestive odor that comes to him at eventide from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dum oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts—in all unworldly motives—in all holy impulses—in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman—in the grace of her step

—in the luster of her eye—in the melody of her voice—in her soft laughter—in her sigh—in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments—in her burning enthusiasms—in her gentle charities—in her meek and devotional endurances—but above all—ah, far above all—he kneels to it, he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty—of her *love*. . . .

1850

## 1806 ~ William Gilmore Simms ~ 1870

WHAT Cooper with his romances of adventure did for the Northern frontier, Simms did for the South Atlantic. He made the region in which he lived and its Indian wars the material for many of his plots. *The Yemassee*, written under the influence of Scott and Cooper, which many think his best novel, deals with the Indian insurrection of 1715. Others deal with the Revolutionary War.

William Gilmore Simms was born at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1806, and spent most of his life near there. His mother died while he was still quite young, and his father gave up his Carolina home and went west, leaving the child in the care of his grandmother. Simms's boyhood was spent in poverty, and he received but little of the usual schooling. He worked for a time as a drug clerk preparatory to the study of medicine, but he gave up clerking to study law. He was admitted to the bar in 1827. He published a volume of verse in 1825 and two more volumes in 1827. In 1828 he gave up law and turned to journalism. His first novel, *Guy Rivers*, was published in 1834, and was followed the next year by *The Yemassee*. His first wife died, and he was married a second time to a Charleston girl of considerable wealth. For a while he was affluent, the owner of a plantation. He now gave himself entirely to literature and became the leader of what was known as "the Charleston school of writers," a group that included the poets Timrod and Hayne. Earlier he had founded a magazine. It failed, but he continued to write for magazine publication. Younger writers found in him a ready advocate and a helper. His life was saddened by the death of nine of his fourteen children, and during the Civil War his second wife also died, and his home and library were burned in Sherman's march to the sea. Again reduced to poverty, it was necessary that he write rapidly and incessantly to support himself until his death in 1870.

Simms was a voluminous author. He turned out eighty volumes of poetry, local history, biography, drama, magazine articles, and fiction. Of the latter there were thirty-five volumes. This was far too much for him to be able to write critically. Like Cooper, he composed vigorously and was copious in the creation of incident. But his plots, although often surring, are loosely connected and marred by easy solutions, oftentimes based on mere chance. He did much to preserve the historical traditions and local color of the South. But for his hack work, his voluminousness, and his reliance upon the fortuitous, he might have taken place among the strongest American novelists. As it is, he ranks as the leading Southern novelist before the Civil War.

Simms published two volumes of literary criticism (*Views and Reviews*) and was fond of theorizing about fiction. It can be useful, he thought, "only when it ministers to morals, to mankind and to society." In his ardent "Americanism in Literature" he argued against imitation of foreign writers and held that America's "poets and artists, to feel her wants, her hopes, her triumphs, must be born of the soil, and ardently devoted to its claims." "National themes seem to be among the most enduring." Since the deeper spiritual significance of ordinary history is often obscured by irrelevant details, he urged that "it is the artist only who is the true historian," and he saw American history as the ideal quarry for the novelist. He exalted "invention" and the intuitive constructive imagination. "It is a tolerably easy thing to write a spirited sketch—a hurried and passionate delineation of an action. . . . But the perfecting of the wondrous whole—the admirable adaptation of means to ends—the fitness of parts—the propriety of the action—the employment of the right materials—and the fine architectural proportions of the fabric,—these are the essentials which determine the claim of the writer to be the Builder. . . ." He distinguished sharply between the Novel and his own ideal, the Romance, which he regarded as "the substitute which the people of the present day offer for the ancient epic." Simms's standards of the Romance are clearly set forth in his preface to *The Yemassee* (see p. 910).

Simms's *Border Romances* were collected in 17 vols. (1859) and reprinted at various times. A 15-vol. edition was issued at Chicago in 1885, and a 17-vol. edition in 1888. The *Works of W. G. Simms*, 22 vols., appeared in New York (1853-66). The standard biography of Simms is by W. P. Trent, in *American Men of Letters Series* (1892). Carl Van Doren wrote of him in *DAB* (1935). An early treatment is J. W. Davidson's, in *The Living Writers of the South* (1869). There are good discussions by Alexander Cowie, in his introduction to *The Yemassee*, in *American Fiction Series* (1937); John Erskine, in *Leading American Novelists* (1910), and by V. L. Parrington, in *Main Currents of American Thought*, II (1927). See also Carl Van Doren in *CHAL*, I (1917) and in *The American Novel* (1921); and A. Keiser, *The Indian in American Literature* (1933). A bibliography by A. S. Salley, Jr. appeared in *Publications of the Southern Historical Association*, I, Oct. 1897; supplemented *ibid.*, XI, Nov., 1907. Oscar Wegelin printed *A List of the Separate Writings of W. G. Simms of South Carolina, 1806-1870* (1906).

## THE SWAMP FOX

It is of interest to compare this poem with Bryant's on the same subject (see p. 545). Bryant's is the more perfect in execution and Simms's the more vivid and realistic in its details of the soldier's life.

We follow where the Swamp Fox guides,  
His friends and merry men are we;  
And when the troop of Tarleton rides,  
We burrow in the cypress tree.  
The turfy hammock is our bed,  
Our home is in the red deer's den,  
Our roof, the tree-top overhead,  
For we are wild and hunted men.

We fly by day and shun its light,  
But, prompt to strike the sudden blow, 10  
We mount and start with early night,  
And through the forest track our foe.  
And soon he hears our chargers leap,  
The flashing saber blinds his eyes,  
And ere he drives away his sleep,  
And rushes from his camp, he dies.

Free bridle-bit, good gallant steed,  
That will not ask a kind caress  
To swim the Santee at our need,  
When on his heels the foemen press— 20  
The true heart and the ready hand,  
The spirit stubborn to be free,  
The twisted bore, the smiting brand—  
And we are Marion's men, you see.

Now light the fire and cook the meal,  
The last perhaps that we shall taste;  
I hear the Swamp Fox round us steal,  
And that's a sign we move in haste.  
He whistles to the scouts, and hark! 30  
You hear his order calm and low.  
Come, wave your torch across the dark,  
And let us see the boys that go.

We may not see their forms again,  
God help 'em, should they find the strife!  
For they are strong and fearless men,  
And make no coward terms for life;  
They'll fight as long as Marion bids,  
And when he speaks the word to shy,

Then, not till then, they turn their steeds,  
Through thickening shade and swamp to fly. 40

Now stir the fire and lie at ease—  
The scouts are gone, and on the brush  
I see the Colonel bend his knees,  
To take his slumbers too. But hush!  
He's praying, comrades; 'tis not strange;  
The man that's fighting day by day  
May well, when night comes, take a change,  
And down upon his knees to pray

Break up that hoe-cake, boys, and hand  
The sly and silent jug that's there, 50  
I love not it should idly stand  
When Marion's men have need of cheer.  
'Tis seldom that our luck affords  
A stuff like this we just have quaffed,  
And dry potatoes on our boards  
May always call for such a draught.

Now pile the brush and roll the log;  
Hard pillow, but a soldier's head  
That's half the time in brake and bog  
Must never think of softer bed 60  
The owl is hooting to the night,  
The cooter crawling o'er the bank,  
And in that pond the flashing light  
Tells where the alligator sank.

What! 'tis the signal! start so soon,  
And through the Santee swamp so deep,  
Without the aid of friendly moon,  
And we, Heaven help us! half asleep!  
But courage, comrades! Marion leads,  
The Swamp Fox takes us out tonight; 70  
So clear your swords and spur your steeds,  
There's goodly chance, I think, of fight.

We follow where the Swamp Fox guides,  
We leave the swamp and cypress tree,  
Our spurs are in our coursers' sides,  
And ready for the strife are we.  
The Tory camp is now in sight,  
And there he cowers within his den;  
He hears our shouts, he dreads the fight,  
He fears, and flies from Marion's men. 80

## From THE YEMASSEE

[*The Romance and the Epic*]

I HAVE entitled this story a romance and not a novel—the reader will permit me to insist upon the distinction I am unwilling that *The Yemassee* should be examined by any other than those standards which have governed me in its composition. . It is only when an author departs from his own stand-  
ards that he offends against propriety and deserves punishment.

The question briefly is, what are the standards of the modern romance itself? The reply is instant Modern romance is the substitute which the people of today offer for the ancient epic Its standards are the same The reader who, reading *Ivanhoe*, keeps Fielding and Richardson beside him, will be at fault in every step of his progress [To such] the works of Maturin, of Scott, of Bulwer, and the rest, are only so much incoherent nonsense

The modern romance is a poem in every sense of the word. It is only with those who insist upon poetry as rhyme, and rhyme as poetry, that the identity fails to be perceptible Its standards are precisely those of the epic It invests individuals with an absorbing interest—it hurries them through crowding events in a narrow space of time—it requires the same unities of plan, of purpose, and harmony of parts, and it seeks for its adventures among the wild and wonderful It does not insist upon what is known, or even what is probable It grasps upon the possible; and, placing a human agent in hitherto untried situations, it exercises its ingenuity in extricating him from them, while describing his feelings and his fortunes in their progress. The task has been well or ill done in proportion to the degree of ingenuity and knowledge which the romancer exhibits in carrying out the details, according to such properties as are called for by the circumstances of the story. These proprieties are the standards set up at his starting, and to which he is required religiously to confine himself.

*The Yemassee* is proposed as an American romance. It is so styled, as much of the material could have been furnished by no other

country Something too much of extravagance—so some may think—even beyond the usual license of fiction—may enter into certain parts of the narrative On this subject, it is enough for me to say that the popular faith yields abundant authority for the wildest of the incidents The natural romance of our country has been my object, and I have not dared beyond it. For the rest—for the general peculiarities of the Indians, in their undegraded condition—my authorities are numerous in all the writers who have written from their own experience. My chief difficulty, I may add, has arisen rather from the discrimination necessary in picking and choosing than from any deficiency of the material itself It is needless to add that the leading events are strictly true, and that the outline is to be found in the several histories devoted to the region of the country in which the scene is laid A slight anachronism occurs in the first volume, but it has little bearing upon the story, and is altogether unimportant.

## CHAPTER XXV

*The Doom of Occonestoga*

The setting of *The Yemassee* is the Carolina frontier early in the eighteenth century The action concerns the efforts of the Indians, led by their revered chief, Sanutec, to exterminate the English colonists and to keep their hunting grounds Occonestoga, the only son of Sanutec and Matwan, has fallen under the spell of the English and been demoralized by their strong drink Chapter XXV, with its paradoxical but logical solution, is the great scene of the story The conventional love theme is supplied by the romance of a pastor's daughter with a young cavalier who proves to be the governor of South Carolina. The book ends with their union and the death of Sanutec (chapters I I, LII) There is abundance of exciting action, with a tendency toward the melodramatic Summs's story belongs to the school of fiction imitated by Scott and Cooper It proved at once popular An English edition was soon called for, and a German translation was made in 1847

"The pain of death is nothing To the chief,  
The forest warrior, it is good to die!  
To die as he has lived, battling and hoarse,  
Shouting a song of triumph But to live

Under such doom as this, were far beyond  
Even his stoic, cold philosophy "

It was a gloomy amphitheater in the deep forests to which the assembled multitude bore the unfortunate Oconestoga. The whole scene was unique in that solemn grandeur, that somber hue, that deep spiritual repose, in which the human imagination delights to invest the region which has been rendered remarkable for the deed of punishment or crime. A small swamp or morass hung upon one side of the wood, from the rank bosom of which, in numberless millions, the flickering firefly perpetually darted upwards, giving a brilliance and animation to the spot, which at that moment no assemblage of light or life could possibly enliven. The ancient oak, a bearded Druid, was there to contribute to the due solemnity of all associations—the green but gloomy cedar, the ghostly cypress, and here and there, the overgrown pine,—all rose up in their primitive strength, and with an undergrowth around them of shrub and flower that scarcely at any time, in that sheltered and congenial habitation, had found it necessary to shrink from winter. In the center of the area thus invested rose a high and venerable mound, the tumulus of many preceding ages, from the washed sides of which might now and then be seen protruding the bleached bones of some ancient warrior or sage. A circle of trees at a little distance hedged it in, made secure and sacred by the performance there of many of their religious rites and offices,—themselves, as they bore the broad arrow of the Ycmasee, being free from all danger of overthrow or desecration by Indian hands.

Amid the confused cries of the multitude, they bore the captive to the foot of the tumulus, and bound him backward, half reclining upon a tree. An hundred warriors stood around, armed according to the manner of the nation, each with a tomahawk and knife and bow. They stood up as for battle, but spectators simply, and took no part in a proceeding which belonged entirely to the priesthood. In a wider and denser circle gathered hundreds more—not the warriors, but the people—the old, the young, the women and the children, all fiercely excited, and anxious

to see a ceremony so awfully exciting to an Indian imagination, involving as it did not only the perpetual loss of human caste and national consideration, but the eternal doom, the degradation, the denial of and the exile from their simple forest heaven. Interspersed with this latter crowd, seemingly at regular intervals, and with an allotted labor assigned them, came a number of old women, not unmeet representatives, individually, for either of the weird sisters of the Scottish thane,

"So withered and so wild in their attire—"

and regarding their cries and actions, of whom we may safely affirm that they looked like anything but inhabitants of earth! In their hands they bore, each of them, a flaming torch of the rich and gummy pine, and these they waved over the heads of the multitude in a thousand various evolutions, accompanying each movement with a fearful cry, which at regular periods was chorused by the assembled mass. A bugle, a native instrument of sound, five feet or more in length hollowed out from the commonest timber—the cracks and breaks of which were carefully sealed up with the resinous gum oozing from their burning torches, and which to this day, borrowed from the natives, our Negroes employ on the southern waters with a peculiar compass and variety of note—was carried by one of the party, and gave forth at intervals timed with much regularity, a long-protracted, single blast, adding greatly to the wild and picturesque character of the spectacle. At the articulation of these sounds, the circles continued to contract, though slowly, until at length but a brief space lay between the armed warriors, the crowd, and the unhappy victim.

The night grew dark of a sudden, and the sky was obscured by one of the brief tempests that usually usher in the summer, and mark the transition, in the South, of one season to another. A wild gust rushed along the wood. The leaves were whirled over the heads of the assemblage, and the trees bent downwards until they cracked and groaned again beneath the wind. A feeling of natural superstition crossed the minds of the multitude, as the hurricane, though common



enough in that region, passed hurriedly along; and a spontaneous and universal voice of chanted prayer rose from the multitude, in their own wild and emphatic language, to the evil deity whose presence they beheld in its progress:

"Thy wing, Opitchi-Manneyto,  
It o'erthrows the tall trees—  
Thy breath, Opitchi-Manneyto,  
Makes the waters tremble—  
Thou art in the hurricane,  
When the wigwam tumbles—  
Thou art in the arrow-fire,  
When the pine is shivered—  
But upon the Yemassee,  
Be thy coming gentle—  
Are they not thy well-beloved?  
Bring they not a slave to thee?  
Look! the slave is bound for thee,  
'Tis the Yemassee that brings him.  
Pass, Opitchi-Manneyto—  
Pass, black spirit, pass from us—  
Be thy passage gentle."

And as the uncouth strain rose at the conclusion into a diapason of unanimous and contending voices, of old and young, male and female, the brief summer tempest had gone by. A shout of self-gratulation, joined with warm acknowledgments, testified the popular sense and confidence in that especial Providence, which even the most barbarous nations claim as forever working in their behalf

At this moment, surrounded by the chiefs, and preceded by the great prophet or high-priest, Enoree-Mattee, came Sanutee, the well-beloved of the Yemassee, to preside over the destinies of his son. There was a due and becoming solemnity, but nothing of the peculiar feelings of the father, visible in his countenance. Blocks of wood were placed around as seats for the chiefs; but Sanutee and the prophet threw themselves, with more of imposing veneration in the proceeding, upon the edge of the tumulus, just where an overcharged spot, bulging out with the crowding bones of its inmates, had formed an elevation answering the purpose of couch or seat. They sat directly looking upon the prisoner, who reclined, bound securely upon his back to a decapitated tree, at a little distance before them. A signal having been given,

the women ceased their clamors; and approaching him they waved their torches so closely above his head as to make all his features distinctly visible to the now watchful and silent multitude. He bore the examination with stern, unmoved features, which the sculptor in brass or marble might have been glad to transfer to his statue in the block. While the torches waved, one of the women now cried aloud, in a barbarous chant, above him:—

"Is not this a Yemassee?  
Wherefore is he bound thus—  
Wherefore, with the broad arrow  
On his right arm growing?  
Wherefore is he bound thus?  
Is not this a Yemassee?"

A second woman now approached him, waving her torch in like manner, seeming closely to inspect his features, and actually passing her fingers over the emblem upon his shoulder, as if to ascertain more certainly the truth of the image. Having done this, she turned about to the crowd, and in the same barbarous sort of strain with the preceding, replied as follows —

"It is not the Yemassee,  
But a dog that runs away  
From his right arm take the arrow,  
He is not the Yemassee "

As these words were uttered, the crowd of women and children around cried out for the execution of the judgment thus given, and once again flamed the torches wildly, and the shoutings were general among the multitude. When they had subsided, a huge Indian came forward and sternly confronted the prisoner. This man was Malatchie, the executioner, and he looked the horrid trade which he professed. His garments were stained and smeared with blood, and covered with scalps, which, connected together by slight strings, formed a loose robe over his shoulders. In one hand he carried a torch, in the other a knife. He came forward, under the instructions of Enoree-Mattee the prophet, to claim the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto,—that is, in our language, the slave of hell. Thus he did in the following strain:—

"Tis Opitchi-Manneyto  
 In Malatchie's ear that cries:—  
 This is not the Yemassee,—  
 And the woman's word is true,—  
 He's a dog that should be mine:  
 I have hunted for him long  
 From his master he had run,  
 With the stranger made his home;  
 Now I have him, he is mine:  
 Hear Opitchi-Manneyto."

And as the besmeared and malignant executioner howled his fierce demand in the very ears of his victim, he hurled the knife which he carried, upwards with such dexterity into the air, that it rested point downward and sticking fast, on its descent, into the tree and just above the head of the doomed Occonestoga. With his hand, the next instant, he laid a resolute gripe upon the shoulder of the victim, as if to confirm and strengthen his claim by actual possession, while at the same time, with a sort of malignant pleasure, he thrust his besmeared and distorted visage close into the face of his prisoner. Writhing against the ligaments which bound him fast, Occonestoga strove to turn his head aside from the disgusting and obtrusive presence, and the desperation of his effort, but that he had been too carefully secured, might have resulted in the release of some of his limbs, for the breast heaved and labored, and every muscle of his arms and legs was wrought, by his severe action, into so many ropes,—hard, full, and indicative of prodigious strength.

There was one person in that crowd who sympathized with the victim. Thus was Hiwassee, the maiden in whose ears he had uttered a word, which in her thoughtless scream and subsequent declaration of the event, when she had identified him, had been the occasion of his captivity. Something of self-reproach for her share in his misfortune, and an old feeling of regard for Occonestoga, —who had once been a favorite with the young of both sexes among his people,—was at work in her bosom; and turning to Echotee, her newly accepted lover, as soon as the demand of Malatchie had been heard, she prayed him to resist the demand.

In such cases, all that a warrior had to do

was simply to join issue upon the claim, and the popular will then determined the question. Echotee could not resist an application so put to him, and by one who had just listened to a prayer of his own so all-important to his own happiness, and being himself a noble youth—one who had been a rival of the captive in his better days,—a feeling of generosity combined with the request of Hiwassee, and he boldly leaped forward. Seizing the knife of Malatchie, which stuck in the tree, he drew it forth and threw it upon the ground, thus removing the sign of property which the executioner had put up in behalf of the evil deity.

"Oconestoga is the brave of the Yemassee," exclaimed the young Echotee, while the eyes of the captive looked what his lips could not have said. "Oconestoga is a brave of Yemassee he is no dog of Malatchie. Wherefore is the cord upon the limbs of a free warrior? Is not Oconestoga a free warrior of Yemassee? The eyes of Echotee have looked upon a warrior like Oconestoga when he took many scalps. Did not Oconestoga lead the Yemassee against the Savannahs? The eyes of Echotee saw him slay the red-eyed Suwannee, the great chief of the Savannahs. Did not Oconestoga go on the warpath with our young braves against the Edistoese, —the brown foxes that came out of the swamp? The eyes of Echotee beheld him. Oconestoga is a brave, and a hunter of Yemassee: he is not the dog of Malatchie. He knows not fear. He hath an arrow with wings, and the panther he runs down in the chase. His tread is the tread of a sly serpent, that comes so that he hears him not upon the track of the red deer feeding down in the valley. Echotee knows the warrior; Echotee knows the hunter, he knows Oconestoga,—but he knows no dog of Opitchi-Manneyto."

"He hath drunk of the poison drink of the palefaces; his feet are gone from the good path of the Yemassee; he would sell his people to the English for a painted bird. He is the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto," cried Malatchie in reply. Echotee was not satisfied to yield the point so soon, and he responded accordingly.

"It is true; the feet of the young warrior have gone away from the good paths of the

Yemassee; but I see not the weakness of the chief when my eye looks back upon the great deeds of the warrior. I see nothing but the shrinking body of Suwannee under the knee—under the knife of the Yemassee. I hear nothing but the war-whoop of the Yemassee, when he broke through the camp of the brown foxes, and scalped them where they skulked in the swamp. I see this Yemassee strike the foe and take the scalp, and I know Occo-  
10 nestoga,—Occonestoga, the son of the Well-beloved, the great chief of the Yemassee."

"It is good, Occonestoga has thanks for Echotee, Echotee is a brave warrior!" murmured the captive to his champion, in tones of melancholy acknowledgment. The current of public feeling began to set somewhat in behalf of the victim, and an occasional whisper to that effect might be heard here and there among the multitude. Even Malatchie  
20 himself looked for a moment as if he thought it not improbable that he might be defrauded of his prey, and while a free shout from many attested the compliment which all were willing to pay to Echotee for his magnanimous defense of one who had once been a rival—and not always successful—in the general estimation, the executioner turned to the prophet and to Sanutee, as if doubtful whether  
30 or not to proceed farther in his claim. But all doubt was soon quieted, as the stern father rose before the assembly. Every sound was stilled in expectation of his words on this so momentous an occasion to himself. They waited not long. The old man had tasked all the energies of the patriot, not less than of the stoic; and having once determined upon the necessity of the sacrifice, he had no hesitating fears or scruples palsyng his determination. He seemed not to regard the imploring glance  
40 of his son, seen and felt by all besides in the assembly, but with a voice entirely unaffected by the circumstances of his position, he spoke forth the doom of the victim in confirmation with that originally expressed.

"Echotee has spoken like a brave warrior with a tongue of truth and a soul that has birth with the sun. But he speaks out of his own heart, and does not speak to the heart of the traitor. The Yemassee will all say for  
50 Echotee, but who can say for Occonestoga

when Sanutee himself is silent? Does the Yemassee speak with a double tongue? Did not the Yemassee promise Occonestoga to Opitchi-Manneyto with the other chiefs? Where are they? They are gone into the swamp, where the sun shines not, and the eyes of Opitchi-Manneyto are upon them. He knows them for his slaves. The arrow is gone from their shoulders and the Yemassee  
knows them no longer. Shall the dog escape who led the way to the English—who brought the poison drink to the chiefs, which made them dogs to the English and slaves to Opitchi-Manneyto? Shall he escape the doom the Yemassee hath put upon them? Sanutee speaks the voice of the Manneyto. Occonestoga is a dog, who would sell his father—who would make our women to carry water for the palefaces. He is not the son of Sanutee  
20 —Sanutee knows him no more. Look, Yemassee,—the well-beloved has spoken!"

He paused, and turning away, sank down silently upon the little bank on which he had before rested, while Malatchie, without further opposition,—for the renunciation of his own son, by one so highly esteemed as Sanutee, was conclusive against the youth,—advanced to execute the terrible judgment upon his victim.

"O father, chief, Sanutee the well-beloved!" was the cry that now, for the first time, burst convulsively from the lips of the prisoner; "hear me, father,—Occonestoga will go on the warpath with thee and with the Yemassee against the Edisto, against the Spaniard, hear, Sanutee,—he will go with thee against the English." But the old man bent not, yielded not, and the crowd gathered nigher in the intensity of their interest.

"Wilt thou have no ear, Sanutee? It is Occonestoga, it is the son of Matwan, that speaks to thee." Sanutee's head sank as the reference was made to Matwan, but he showed no other sign of emotion. He moved not, he spoke not, and bitterly and hopelessly the youth exclaimed,—

"Oh! thou art colder than the stone house of the adder, and deafest than his ears. Father, Sanutee, wherefore wilt thou lose me, even as the tree its leaf, when the storm smites it in summer? Save me, my father."

And his head sank in despair as he beheld the unchanging look of stern resolve with which the unbending sire regarded him. For a moment he was unmanned; until a loud shout of derision from the crowd, as they beheld the show of his weakness, came to the support of his pride. The Indian shrinks from humiliation, where he would not shrink from death, and as the shout reached his ears, he shouted back his defiance, raised his head 10 loftily in air, and with the most perfect composure commenced singing his song of death,—the song of many victories.

"Wherefore sings he his death-song?" was the cry from many voices "he is not to die!"

"Thou art the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto," cried Malatchie to the captive, "thou shalt sing no lie of thy victories in the ear of Yemassee. The slave of Opitchi-Manneyto has no triumph", and the words of the song were 20 effectually drowned, if not silenced in the tremendous clamor which they raised about him

It was then that Malatchie claimed his victim. The doom had been already given, but the ceremony of expatriation and outlawry was yet to follow, and under the direction of the prophet, the various castes and classes of the nation prepared to take a final leave of one who could no longer be known among them. 30 First of all came a band of young marriageable women, who, wheeling in a circle three times about him, sang together a wild apostrophe containing a bitter farewell, which nothing in our language could perfectly embody:—

"Go, thou hast no wife in Yemassee—thou hast given no lodge to the daughter of Yemassee—thou hast slain no meat for thy children. Thou hast no name—the women of Yemassee know thee no more. They know thee no 40 more."

And the final sentence was reverberated from the entire assembly —

"They know thee no more—they know thee no more."

Then came a number of the ancient men, the patriarchs of the nation, who surrounded him in circular mazes three several times, singing as they did so a hymn of like im- 50 port.—

"Go, thou sittest not in the council of Yemassee—thou shalt not speak wisdom to the boy that comes. Thou hast no name in Yemassee—the fathers of Yemassee, they know thee no more."

And again the whole assembly cried out, as with one voice —

"They know thee no more—they know thee no more."

These were followed by the young warriors, his old associates, who now in a solemn band approached him to go through a like performance. His eyes were shut as they came, his blood was chilled in his heart, and the articulated farewell of their wild chant failed seemingly to reach his ear. Nothing but the last sentence he heard —

"Thou that wast a brother,  
Thou art nothing now—  
The young warriors of Yemassee,  
They know thee no more."

And the crowd cried with them —

"They know thee no more"

"Is no hatchet sharp for Occonestoga?" moaned forth the suffering savage. But his trials were only then begun. Enoree-Mattee now approached him with the words with which, as the representative of the good Manneyto, he renounced him—with which he denied him access to the Indian heaven, and left him a slave and an outcast, a miserable wanderer amid the shadows and the swamps, and liable to all the dooms and terrors which come with the service of Opitchi-Manneyto.

"Thou wast a child of Manneyto—"

sung the high priest in a solemn chant, and with a deep-toned voice that thrilled strangely amid the silence of the scene.

"Thou wast a child of Manneyto—  
He gave thee arrows and an eye,  
Thou wast the strong son of Manneyto—  
He gave thee feathers and a wing,  
Thou wast a young brave of Manneyto—  
He gave thee scalps and a war-song—  
But he knows thee no more—he knows thee 50 no more."

And the clustering multitude again gave back the last line in wild chorus. The prophet continued his chant:—

"That Opitchi-Manneyto  
He commands thee for his slave—  
And the Yemassee must hear him,  
Hear, and give thee for his slave:  
They will take from thee the arrow,  
The broad arrow of thy people;  
Thou shalt see no blessed valley,  
Where the plum-groves always bloom;  
Thou shalt hear no song of valor  
From the ancient Yemassee,  
Father, mother, name, and people,  
Thou shalt lose with that broad arrow.  
Thou art lost to the Manneyto—  
He knows thee no more, he knows thee no more "

The despair of hell was in the face of the victim, and he howled forth in a cry of agony—that for a moment silenced the wild chorus of the crowd around—the terrible consciousness in his mind of that privation which the doom entailed upon him. Every feature was convulsed with emotion, and the terrors of Opitchi-Manneyto's dominion seemed already in strong exercise upon the muscles of his heart, when Sanutee, the father, silently approached him, and with a pause of a few moments, stood gazing upon the son from whom he was to be separated eternally—whom not even the untiring, the restoring, hand of death could possibly restore to him. And he, his once noble son,—the pride of his heart, the gleam of his hope, the triumphant warrior, who was even to increase his own glory, and transmit the endearing title of Well-beloved, which the Yemassee had given him, to a succeeding generation—he was to be lost forever! These promises were all blasted; and the father was now present to yield him up eternally—to deny him—to forfeit him, in fearful penalty, to the nation whose genius he had wronged, and whose rights he had violated. The old man stood for a moment,—rather, we may suppose, for the recovery of his resolution, than with any desire for the contemplation of the pitiable form before him. The pride of the youth came back to him—the pride of the strong mind in its desolation—as his eye caught the

inflexible gaze of his unswerving father; and he exclaimed bitterly and loud.—

"Wherefore art thou come? Thou hast been my foe, not my father! Away—I would not behold thee!" and he closed his eyes after the speech, as if to relieve himself from a disgusting presence

"Thou hast said well, Oconestoga Sanutee is thy foe; he is not thy father. To say this in thy ears has he come. Look on him, Oconestoga—look up and hear thy doom. The young and the old of the Yemassee, the warrior and the chief—they have all denied thee—all given thee up to Opitchi-Manneyto. Oconestoga is no name for the Yemassee. The Yemassee gives it to his dog. The prophet of Manneyto has forgotten thee, thou art unknown to those who were thy people. And I, thy father—with this speech, I yield thee to Opitchi-Manneyto. Sanutee is no longer thy father—thy father knows thee no more "

And once more came to the ears of the victim that melancholy chorus of the multitude.

"—He knows thee no more, he knows thee no more."

Sanutee turned quickly away as he had spoken, and as if he suffered more than he was willing to show, the old man rapidly hastened to the little mound where he had been previously sitting, his eyes averted from the further spectacle. Oconestoga, goaded to madness by these several incidents, shrieked forth the bitterest execrations, until Enoree-Mattee, preceding Malatchie, again approached. Having given some directions in an under-tone to the latter, he retired, leaving the executioner alone with his victim. Malatchie then, while all was silence in the crowd,—a thick silence, in which even respiration seemed to be suspended,—proceeded to his duty, and lifting the feet of Oconestoga carefully from the ground, he placed a log under them, then addressing him, as he again bared his knife, which he stuck in the tree above his head, he sung:—

"I take from thee the earth of Yemassee—  
I take from thee the water of Yemassee—  
I take from thee the arrow of Yemassee—  
Thou art no longer a Yemassee—  
The Yemassee knows thee no more."

"The Yemassee knows thee no more," cried the multitude, and their universal shout was deafening upon the ear. Oconestoga said no word now, he could offer no resistance to the unnerving hands of Malatchie, who now bared the arm more completely of its covering. But his limbs were convulsed with the spasms of that dreadful terror of the future which was racking and raging in every pulse of his heart. He had full faith in the superstitions of his people. His terrors acknowledged the full horrors of their doom. A despairing agony, which no language could describe, had possession of his soul. Meanwhile the silence of all indicated the general anxiety, and Malatchie prepared to seize the knife and perform the operation, when a confused murmur arose from the crowd around. the mass gave way and parted, and rushing wildly into the area came Matwan, his mother—the long black hair streaming—the features, an astonishing likeness to his own, convulsed like his, and her action that of one reckless of all things in the way of the forward progress she was making to the person of her child. She cried aloud as she came, with a voice that rang like a sudden death-bell through the ring —

"Would you keep the mother from her boy, and let to be lost to her for ever? Shall she have no parting with the young brave she bore in her bosom? Away, keep me not back—I will look upon, I will love him. He shall have the blessing of Matwan, though the Yemassee and the Manneyto curse."

The victim heard, and a momentary renovation of mental life, perhaps a renovation of hope, spoke out in the simple exclamation which fell from his lips —

"Oh Matwan—Oh mother!"

She rushed towards the spot where she heard his appeal, and thrusting the executioner aside, threw her arms desperately about his neck.

"Touch him not, Matwan," was the general cry from the crowd. "Touch him not, Matwan. Manneyto knows him no more."

"But Matwan knows him, the mother knows her child, though the Manneyto denies him. O boy—O boy, boy, boy!" And she sobbed like an infant on his neck.

"Thou art come, Matwan, thou art come;

but wherefore? To curse like the father—to curse like the Manneyto?" mournfully said the captive.

"No, no, no! Not to curse—not to curse! When did mother curse the child she bore? Not to curse but to bless thee. To bless thee and forgive."

"Tear her away," cried the prophet; "let Opitchi-Manneyto have his slave!"

"Tear her away, Malatchie," cried the crowd, now impatient for the execution. Malatchie approached.

"Not yet—not yet," appealed the woman. "Shall not the mother say farewell to the child she shall see no more?" and she waved Malatchie back, and in the next instant drew hastily from the drapery of her dress a small hatchet, which she had there carefully concealed.

"What wouldst thou do, Matwan?" asked Oconestoga, as his eye caught the glare of the weapon.

"Save thee, my boy—save thee for thy mother, Oconestoga—save thee for the happy valley."

"Wouldst thou slay me, mother? Wouldst strike the heart of thy son?" he asked, with a something of reluctance to receive death from the hands of a parent.

"I strike thee but to save thee, my son, since they cannot take the totem from thee after the life is gone. Turn away from me thy head, let me not look upon thine eyes as I strike, lest my hands grow weak and tremble. Turn thine eyes away—I will not lose thee."

His eyes closed, and the fatal instrument, lifted above her head, was now visible in the sight of all. The executioner rushed forward to interpose, but he came too late. The tomahawk was driven deep into the skull, and but a single sentence from his lips preceded the final insensibility of the victim.

"It is good, Matwan, it is good, thou hast saved me—the death is in my heart." And back he sank as he spoke; while a shriek of mingled joy and horror from the lips of the mother announced the success of her effort to defeat the doom, the most dreadful in the imagination of the Yemassee.

"He is not lost—he is not lost! They may not take the child from his mother. They

may not keep him from the valley of Manneyto. He is free—he is free!" And she fell back in a deep swoon into the arms of Sanutee, who by this time had approached. She had

defrauded Opitchi-Manneyto of his victim, for they may not remove the badge of the nation from any but the living victim.

1835

## 1815 – Richard Henry Dana Jr. – 1882

THE AUTHOR of the classic of the sea, *Two Years Before the Mast*, was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the son of Richard Henry Dana, critic, journalist, and editor of the *North American Review*. Like Jonathan Edwards and Oliver Wendell Holmes, he was a descendant of Anne Bradstreet. The younger Dana attended Harvard, but because of weak health and eyesight, he was directed by his physician to take a sea voyage after his junior year. At nineteen he shipped as an ordinary seaman "before the mast" on the brig *Pilgrim*, sailing with a miscellaneous cargo from Boston to California via Cape Horn. These were the days of the highest development of the sailor's calling; after the middle of the century there were great changes in the condition of the merchant marine. Dana started homeward from San Diego in the *Alert* with a cargo of hides, May 18, 1836. Returning vigorous and ambitious after twenty-five months, he finished his course at Harvard and was graduated in 1837. He published his famous narrative of sea adventure in 1840, the year in which he was admitted to practice law. It is his one literary work, although he wrote for legal periodicals, played a political role as an abolitionist, and became a distinguished member of the Massachusetts bar. He died of pneumonia in 1882 at Rome.

His truthful autobiographical account of a sailor's life, perhaps the best of its kind, was written partly with a humanitarian intent. It accomplished what he hoped, and helped to ameliorate the life of sailors by exhibiting the occasional brutality of officers toward their men. He writes of his two years' adventure directly and accurately and with charm of style. Distinct personalities emerge as he pictures the crew, and nautical matters are made intelligible to land readers. He was brought up on romantic literature and liked in his youth Spenser, Byron, and Scott, and his narrative has something of the charm of romance. Mostly, however, its fundamental truthfulness, its dramatic incidents, and the author's good sense and modesty have made it one of our most famous narratives of adventure at sea.

*Two Years Before the Mast* is available in many special editions, as in Everyman's Library and in the Riverside Literature Series. For Dana's biography consult Charles Francis Adams's *Richard Henry Dana* (2 vols., 1890), and Bliss Perry's excellent essay, "Dana's Magical Chance," in *The Prasse of Folly* (1923). E. F. Edgett wrote of Dana in the *DAB* (1930). See also G. Y. Smalley

in *Anglo-American Memories* (1911), E. W. Emerson, *The Early Years of the Saturday Club* (1918), and J. D. Hart, "The Other Writings of Richard Henry Dana," *Colophon*, Part 19 (1934). Other articles may be found in the *Nation*, CI, Oct. 21, 1915, and in the *Outlook*, XCIX, Nov. 1911.

# From TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST

The *Pilgrim* sailed from Boston, August 14, 1834 Dana tells of his duties and experiences as a member of the crew and of the dangers of the voyage about Cape Horn, which was rounded by the middle of November The brig anchored at Santa Barbara, January 14, 1835 The author's account of life on the California coast includes details of trading at Monterey, of landing hides at San Diego, of hide-cunning, and of "good times on shore" He went as far north as San Francisco The homeward trip involved the rounding again of Cape Horn in the passage from the Pacific into the Atlantic, and the northward journey back to Boston

## CHAPTER V

### [*Rounding the Horn*]

WEDNESDAY, *November 5th* The weather was fine during the previous night, and we had a clear view of the Magellan Clouds and of the Southern Cross The Magellan Clouds consist of three small nebulae in the southern part of the heavens,—two bright, like the milky-way, and one dark They are first seen, just above the horizon, soon after crossing the southern tropic The Southern Cross begins to be seen at 18° N., and, when off Cape Horn, is nearly overhead It is composed of four stars in that form, and is one of the brightest constellations in the heavens

During the first part of this day (Wednesday) the wind was light, but after noon it came on fresh, and we furled the royals We still kept the studding sails out, and the captain said he should go round with them if he could Just before eight o'clock (then about sundown, in that latitude) the cry of "All hands ahoy!" was sounded down the fore scuttle and the after hatchway, and, hurrying upon deck, we found a large black cloud rolling on toward us from the southwest, and darkening the whole heavens. "Here comes Cape Horn!" said the chief mate, and we had hardly time to haul down and clew up before it was upon us. In a few minutes a heavier sea

was raised than I had ever seen, and as it was directly ahead, the little brig, which was no better than a bathing-machine, plunged into it, and all the forward part of her was under water; the sea pouring in through the bow-ports and hawse-holes and over the knight-heads, threatening to wash everything overboard In the lee scuppers it was up to a man's waist We sprang aloft and double-reefed the topsails, and furled the other sails, and made all snug But this would not do; the brig was laboring and straining against the head sea, and the gale was growing worse and worse. At the same time sleet and hail were driving with all fury against us. We clewed down, and hauled out the reef-tackles again, and close-reefed the fore-topsail, and furled the main, and hove her to, on the starboard tack. Here was an end to our fine prospects We made up our minds to head winds and cold weather, sent down the royal yards, and unrove the gear; but all the rest of the top hamper remained aloft, even to the sky-sail masts and studding-sail booms.

Throughout the night it stormed violently, —rain, hail, snow, and sleet beating upon the vessel,—the wind continuing ahead, and the sea running high At daybreak (about three A.M.) the deck was covered with snow. The captain sent up the steward with a glass of grog to each of the watch, and all the time that we were off the Cape, grog was given to the morning watch, and to all hands whenever we reefed topsails The clouds cleared away at sunrise, and, the wind becoming more fair, we again made sail and stood nearly up to our course.

*Thursday, November 6th.* It continued more pleasant through the first part of the day, but at night we had the same scene over again. This time we did not heave to, as on the night before, but endeavored to beat to windward under close-reefed topsails, balance-reefed try-sail, and fore top-mast staysail. This night it was my turn to steer, or, as the sailors say, my *trick* at the helm, for two hours. Inexperienced



as I was, I made out to steer to the satisfaction of the officer, and neither Stimson nor I gave up our tricks, all the time that we were off the Cape. This was something to boast of, for it requires a good deal of skill and watchfulness to steer a vessel close hauled, in a gale of wind, against a heavy head sea "Ease her when she pitches," is the word; and a little carelessness in letting her ship a heavy sea might sweep the decks, or take a mast out of her.

*Friday, November 7th.* Towards morning the wind went down, and during the whole forenoon we lay tossing about in a dead calm, and in the midst of a thick fog. The calms here are unlike those in most parts of the world, for here there is generally so high a sea running, with periods of calm so short that it has no time to go down, and vessels, being under no command of sails or rudder, lie like logs upon the water. We were obliged to steady the booms and yards by guys and braces, and to lash everything well below. We now found our top hamper of some use, for though it is liable to be carried away or sprung by the sudden "bringing up" of a vessel when pitching in a chopping sea, yet it is a great help in steadying a vessel when rolling in a long swell, —giving more slowness, ease, and regularity to the motion.

The calm of the morning reminds me of a scene which I forgot to describe at the time of its occurrence, but which I remember from its being the first time that I had heard the near breathing of whales. It was on the night that we passed between the Falkland Islands and Staten Land. We had the watch from twelve to four, and, coming upon deck, found the little brig lying perfectly still, enclosed in a thick fog, and the sea as smooth as though oil had been poured upon it, yet now and then a long, low swell rolling under its surface, slightly lifting the vessel, but without breaking the glassy smoothness of the water. We were surrounded far and near by shoals of sluggish whales and grampuses, which the fog prevented our seeing, rising slowly to the surface, or perhaps lying out at length, heaving out those lazy, deep, and long-drawn breathings which give such an impression of supineness and strength. Some of the watch were asleep, and the others were quiet, so that there was

nothing to break the illusion, and I stood leaning over the bulwarks, listening to the slow breathings of the mighty creatures,—now one breaking the water just alongside, whose black body I almost fancied that I could see through the fog, and again another, which I could just hear in the distance,—until the low and regular swell seemed like the heaving of the ocean's mighty bosom to the sound of its own heavy and long-drawn respirations.

Towards the evening of this day (Friday, 7th) the fog cleared off, and we had every appearance of a cold blow; and soon after sundown it came on. Again it was clew up and haul down, reef and furl, until we had got her down to close-reefed topsails, double-reefed trysail, and reefed fore spenser. Snow, hail, and sleet were driving upon us most of the night, and the sea was breaking over the bows and covering the forward part of the little vessel, but, as she would lay her course, the captain refused to leave her to

*Saturday, November 8th.* This day began with calm and thick fog, and ended with hail, snow, a violet wind, and close-reefed topsails.

*Sunday, November 9th.* Today the sun rose clear and continued so until twelve o'clock, when the captain got an observation. This was very well for Cape Horn, and we thought it a little remarkable that, as we had not had one unpleasant Sunday during the whole voyage, the only tolerable day here should be a Sunday. We got time to clear up the steerage and forecabin, and set things to rights, and to overhaul our wet clothes a little. But this did not last very long. Between five and six—the sun was then nearly three hours high—the cry of "All Starboardlines<sup>1</sup> ahoy!" summoned our watch on deck, and immediately all hands were called. A true specimen of Cape Horn was coming upon us. A great cloud of a dark slate-color was driving on us from the southwest; and we did our best to take in sail (for the light sails had been set during the first part of the day) before we were in the midst of it. We had got the light sails furled, the courses hauled up, and the topsail reef-tackles hauled out, and were just mounting the fore-rigging when the storm struck us. In an instant the sea,

<sup>1</sup> It is the fashion to call the respective watches Starboardlines and Larboardlines [*Dane's note.*]

which had been comparatively quiet, was running higher and higher, and it became almost as dark as night. The hail and sleet were harder than I had yet felt them, seeming almost to pin us down to the rigging. We were longer taking in sail than ever before, for the sails were stiff and wet, the ropes and rigging covered with snow and sleet, and we ourselves cold and nearly blinded with the violence of the storm. By the time we had got down upon deck again, the little brig was plunging madly into a tremendous head sea, which at every drive rushed in through the bow-ports and over the bows, and buried all the forward part of the vessel. At this instant the chief mate, who was standing on the top of the windlass, at the foot of the spenser-mast, called out, "Lay out there and furl the jib!" This was no agreeable or safe duty, yet it must be done. John, a Swede (the best sailor on board), who belonged on the fore-castle, sprang out upon the bowsprit. Another one must go. It was a clear case of holding back. I was near the mate, but sprang past several, threw the downhaul over the windlass, and jumped between the night-heads out upon the bowsprit. The crew stood abaft the windlass and hauled the jib down, while John and I got out upon the weather side of the jib-boom, our feet on the foot-ropes, holding on by the spar, the great jib flying off to leeward and *slating*<sup>1</sup> so as almost to throw us off the boom. For some time we could do nothing but hold on, and the vessel, diving into two huge seas, one after the other, plunged us twice into the water up to our chins. We hardly knew whether we were on or off; when, the boom lifting us up dripping from the water, we were raised high into the air and then lunged below again. John thought the boom would go every moment, and called out to the mate to keep the vessel off, and haul down the staysail, but the fury of the wind and the breaking of the seas against the bows defied every attempt to make ourselves heard, and we were obliged to do the best we could in our situation. Fortunately no other seas so heavy struck her, and we succeeded in furling the jib "after a fashion", and, coming in over the staysail nettings, were not a little pleased to find that all was snug, and

the watch gone below; for we were soaked through, and it was very cold. John admitted that it had been a post of danger, which good sailors seldom do when the thing is over. The weather continued nearly the same through the night.

*Monday, November 10th.* During a part of this day we were hove to, but the rest of the time were driving on, under close-reefed sails, with a heavy sea, a strong gale, and frequent squalls of hail and snow.

*Tuesday, November 11th.* The same.

*Wednesday* The same.

*Thursday* The same.

We had now got hardened to Cape weather, the vessel was under reduced sail, and everything secured on deck and below, so that we had little to do but to steer and to stand our watch. Our clothes were all wet through, and the only change was from wet to more wet. There is no fire in the fore-castle, and we cannot dry clothes at the galley.<sup>1</sup> It was in vain to think of reading or working below, for we were too tired, the hatchways were closed down, and everything was wet and uncomfortable, black and dirty, heaving and pitching. We had only to come below when the watch was out, wring our wet clothes, hang them up to chafe against the bulkheads, and turn in and sleep as soundly as we could, until our watch was called again. A sailor can sleep anywhere, —no sound of wind, water, canvas, rope, wood, or iron can keep him awake,—and we were always fast asleep when three blows on the hatchway, and the unwelcome cry of "All Starboardlines ahoy! eight bells there below! do you hear the news?" (the usual formula of calling the watch) roused us up from our berths upon the cold, wet decks. The only time when we could be said to take any pleasure was at night and morning, when we were allowed a tin pot full of hot tea (or, as the sailors significantly call it, "water bewitched") sweetened with molasses. This, bad as it was, was still warm and comforting, and, together with our sea biscuit and cold salt beef, made a meal. Yet even this meal was attended with some uncertainty. We had to go ourselves to the galley and take our *kid*<sup>2</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> flapping violently

<sup>1</sup> kitchen      <sup>2</sup> a deep wooden dish or mess tub for holding rations

beef and tin pots of tea, and run the risk of losing them before we could get below. Many a kid of beef have I seen rolling in the scuppers, and the bearer lying at his length on the decks. I remember an English lad who was the life of the crew—whom we afterwards lost overboard—standing for nearly ten minutes at the galley, with his pot of tea in his hand, waiting for a chance to get down into the fore-castle; and, seeing what he thought was a "smooth spell," started to go forward. He had just got to the end of the windlass, when a great sea broke over the bows, and for a moment I saw nothing of him but his head and shoulders, and at the next instant, being taken off his legs, he was carried aft with the sea, until her stern lifting up, and sending the water forward, he was left high and dry at the side of the long-boat, still holding on to his tin pot, which had now nothing in it but salt water. But nothing could ever daunt him, or overcome, for a moment, his habitual good-humor. Regaining his legs, and shaking his fist at the man at the wheel, he rolled below, saying, as he passed, "A man's no sailor, if he can't take a joke." The ducking was not the worst of such an affair, for, as there was an allowance of tea, you could get no more from the galley, and though the others would never suffer a man to go without, but would always turn in a little from their own pots to fill up his, yet this was at best but dividing the loss among all hands.

Something of the same kind befell me a few days after. The cook had just made for us a mess of hot "scouse,"—that is, biscuit pounded fine, salt beef cut into small pieces, and a few potatoes, boiled up together and seasoned with pepper. This was a rare treat, and I, being the last at the galley, had it put in my charge to carry down for the mess. I got along very well as far as the hatchway, and was just going down the steps, when a heavy sea, lifting the stern out of water, and, passing forward, dropping it again, threw the steps from their place, and I came down into the steerage a little faster than I meant to, with the kid on top of me, and the whole precious mess scattered over the floor. Whatever your feelings may be, you must make a joke of everything at sea; and if you were to fall from aloft

and be caught in the belly of a sail, and thus saved from instant death, it would not do to look at all disturbed, or to treat it as a serious matter.

*Friday, November 14th* We were now well to the westward of the Cape, and were changing our course to northward as much as we dared, since the strong southwest winds, which prevailed then, carried us in towards Patagonia. At two P.M. we saw a sail on our larboard beam, and at four we made it out to be a large ship, steering our course, under single-reefed topsails. We at that time had shaken the reefs out of our topsails, as the wind was lighter, and set the main top-gallant sail. As soon as our captain saw what sail she was under, he set the fore top-gallant sail and flying jib, and the old whaler—for such his boats and short sail showed him to be—felt a little ashamed, and shook the reefs out of his topsails, but could do no more, for he had sent down his top-gallant masts off the Cape. He ran down for us, and answered our hail as the whale-ship *New England*, of Poughkeepsie, one hundred and twenty days from New York. Our captain gave our name, and added, ninety-two days from Boston. They then had a little conversation about longitude, in which they found that they could not agree. The ship fell astern, and continued in sight during the night. Toward morning, the wind having become light, we crossed our royal and skysail yards, and at daylight we were seen under a cloud of sail, having royals and skysails fore and aft. The "spouter," as the sailors call a whaler, had sent up his main top-gallant mast and set the sail, and made signal for us to heave to. About half past seven their whale-boat came alongside, and Captain Job Terry sprang on board, a man known in every port and by every vessel in the Pacific Ocean. "Don't you know Job Terry?" I thought everybody knew Job Terry," said a green hand, who came in the boat, to me, when I asked him about his captain. He was indeed a singular man. He was six feet high, wore thick cowhide boots, and brown coat and trousers, and, except a sunburnt complexion, had not the slightest appearance of a sailor, yet he had been forty years in the whale-trade, and, as he said himself, had owned ships, built ships, and

sailed ships. His boat's crew were a pretty raw set, just out of the bush, and, as the sailor's phrase is, "hadn't got the hayseed out of their hair." Captain Terry convinced our captain that our reckoning was a little out, and, having spent the day on board, put off in his boat at sunset for his ship, which was now six or eight miles astern. He began a "yarn" when he came aboard, which lasted, with 'but little intermission, for four hours. It was all about 10 himself, and the Peruvian government, and the Dublin frigate, and her captain, Lord James Townshend, and President Jackson, and the ship *Ann M'Kum*, of Baltimore. It would probably never have come to an end, had not a good breeze sprung up, which sent him off to his own vessel. One of the lads who came in his boat, a thoroughly countrified-looking fellow, seemed to care very little about the vessel, rigging, or anything else, but went 20 round looking at the live stock, and leaned over the pigsty, and said he wished he was back again tending his father's pigs.

A curious case of dignity occurred here. It seems that in a whale-ship there is an intermediate class, called boat-steerers. One of them came in Captain Terry's boat, but we thought he was cockswain of the boat, and a cockswain is only a sailor. In the whaler, the boat-steerers are between the officers and 30 crew, a sort of petty officers, keep by themselves in the waist,<sup>1</sup> sleep amidships, and eat by themselves, either at a separate table, or at the cabin table, after the captain and mates are done. Of all this hierarchy we were entirely ignorant, so the poor boat-steerer was left to himself. The second mate would not notice him, and seemed surprised at his keeping amidships, but his pride of office would not allow him to go forward. With dinner-time came the *experimentum crucis*. What would he do? The second mate went to the second table without asking him. There was nothing for him but famine or humiliation. We asked him into the fore-castle, but he faintly declined. The whale-boat's crew explained it to us, and we asked him again. Hunger got the victory over pride of rank, and his boat-steering majesty had to take his grub out of our kid, and eat with his jackknife. 50

<sup>1</sup> middle of the ship

Yet the man was ill at ease all the time, was sparing of his conversation, and kept up the notion of a condescension under stress of circumstances. One would say that, instead of a tendency to equality in human beings, the tendency is to make the most of inequalities, natural or artificial.

At eight o'clock we altered our course to the northward, bound for Juan Fernandez.<sup>1</sup>

This day we saw the last of the albatrosses, which had been our companions a great part of the time off the Cape. I had been interested in the bird from descriptions, and Coleridge's poem,<sup>2</sup> and was not at all disappointed. We caught one or two with a baited hook which we floated astern upon a shingle. Their long, flapping wings, long legs, and large, staring eyes, give them a very peculiar appearance. They look well on the wing, but one of the finest sights that I have ever seen was an albatross asleep upon the water, during a calm, off Cape Horn, when a heavy sea was running. There being no breeze, the surface of the water was unbroken, but a long, heavy swell was rolling, and we saw the fellow, all white, directly ahead of us, asleep upon the waves, with his head under his wing, now rising on the top of one of the big billows, and then falling slowly until he was lost in the hollow 30 between. He was undisturbed for some time, until the noise of our bows, gradually approaching, roused him, when, lifting his head, he stared upon us for a moment, and then spread his wide wings and took his flight.

#### CHAPTER XXIX

#### [Good-bye, California]

We turned-in early, knowing that we might expect an early call, and sure enough, before the stars had quite faded, "All hands ahoy!" and we were turned-to, heaving out ballast. A regulation of the port forbids any ballast to be thrown overboard, accordingly, our long-boat was lined inside with rough boards and brought alongside the gangway, but where one tubful went into the boat twenty went overboard. This is done by

<sup>1</sup> island group in the South Pacific about 400 miles off the coast of Chile. <sup>2</sup> "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," published in 1798.

every vessel, as it saves more than a week of labor, which would be spent in loading the boats, rowing them to the point, and unloading them. When any people from the presidio were on board, the boat was hauled up and the ballast thrown in; but when the coast was clear, she was dropped astern again, and the ballast fell overboard. This is one of those petty frauds which many vessels practise in ports of inferior foreign nations, and which are lost sight of among the deeds of greater weight which are hardly less common. Fortunately, a sailor, not being a free agent in work aboard ship, is not accountable, yet the fact of being constantly employed, without thought, in such things, begets an indifference to the rights of others.

Friday, and a part of Saturday, we were engaged in this work, until we had thrown out all but what we wanted under our cargo on the passage home; when, as the next day was Sunday, and a good day for smoking ship, we cleared everything out of the cabin and fore-castle, made a slow fire of charcoal, birch bark, brimstone, and other matters, on the ballast in the bottom of the hold, calked up the hatches and every open seam, and pasted over the cracks of the windows, and the slides of the scuttles and companion-way. Wherever smoke was seen coming out, we calked and pasted and, so far as we could, made the ship smoke tight. The captain and officers slept under the awning which was spread over the quarter-deck; and we stowed ourselves away under an old studding-sail, which we drew over one side of the fore-castle. The next day, from fear that something might happen in the way of fire, orders were given for no one to leave the ship, and, as the decks were lumbered up, we could not wash them down, so we had nothing to do all day long. Unfortunately, our books were where we could not get at them, and we were turning about for something to do, when one man recollected a book he had left in the galley. He went after it, and it proved to be *Woodstock*. This was a great windfall, and as all could not read it at once, I, being the scholar of the company, was appointed reader. I got a knot of six or eight about me, and no one could have had a more attentive audience. Some laughed at the

"scholars," and went over the other side of the fore-castle to work and spin their yarns, but I carried the day, and had the cream of the crew for my hearers. Many of the reflections, and the political parts, I omitted, but all the narrative they were delighted with, especially the descriptions of the Puritans, and the sermons and harangues of the Round-head soldiers. The gallantry of Charles, Dr. Radcliffe's plots, the knavery of "trusty Tompkins,"—in fact, every part seemed to chain their attention. Many things which, while I was reading, I had a misgiving about, thinking them above their tastes, I was surprised to find them enter into completely.

I read nearly all day, until sundown; when, as soon as supper was over, as I had nearly finished, they got a light from the galley, and, by skipping what was less interesting, I carried them through to the marriage of Everard, and the restoration of Charles the Second, before eight o'clock.

The next morning, we took the barmen from the hatches, and opened the ship. A few stifled rats were found, and what bugs, cockroaches, fleas, and other vermin there might have been on board must have unroved their life-lines before the hatches were opened. The ship being now ready, we covered the bottom of the hold over, fore and aft, with dried brush for dunnage,<sup>1</sup> and, having levelled everything away, we were ready to take in our cargo. All the hides that had been collected since the *California* left the coast (a little more than two years), amounting to about forty thousand, had been cured, dried, and stowed away in the house, waiting for our good ship to take them to Boston.

Now began the operation of taking in our cargo, which kept us hard at work, from the gray of the morning till starlight, for six weeks, with the exception of Sundays, and of just time to swallow our meals. To carry the work on quicker, a division of labor was made. Two men threw the hides down from the piles in the house, two more picked them up and put them on a long horizontal pole, raised a few feet from the ground, where they were beaten by two more with flails, somewhat like those used in threshing wheat. When beaten,

<sup>1</sup> loose material used to prevent injury to cargo

they were taken from this pole by two more, and placed upon a platform of boards, and ten or a dozen men, with their trousers rolled up, and hides upon their heads, were constantly going back and forth from the platform to the boat, which was kept off where she would just float. The throwing the hides upon the pole was the most difficult work, and required a sleight of hand which was only to be got by long practice. As I was known for a hide-  
 10 curer, this post was assigned to me, and I continued at it for six or eight days, tossing, in that time, from eight to ten thousand hides, until my wrists became so lame that I gave in, and was transferred to the gang that was employed in filling the boats, where I remained for the rest of the time. As we were obliged to carry the hides on our heads from fear of their getting wet, we each had a piece of  
 20 sheepskin sewed into the inside of our hats, with the wool next our heads, and thus were able to bear the weight, day after day, which might otherwise have worn off our hair, and borne hard upon our skulls. Upon the whole ours was the best berth, for though the water was nipping cold, early in the morning and late at night, and being so continually wet was rather an exposure, yet we got rid of the constant dust and dirt from the beating of  
 30 the hides, and, being all of us young and hearty, did not mind the exposure. The older men of the crew, whom it would have been imprudent to keep in the water, remained on board with the mate, to stow the hides away, as fast as they were brought off by the boats.

We continued at work in this manner until the lower hold was filled to within four feet of the beams, when all hands were called aboard to begin *steering*.<sup>1</sup> As this is a peculiar opera-  
 40 tion, it will require a minute description.

Before stowing the hides, as I have said, the ballast is levelled off, just above the keelson, and then loose dunnage is placed upon it, on which the hides rest. The greatest care is used in stowing, to make the ship hold as many  
 hides as possible. It is no mean art, and a man skilled in it is an important character in California. Many a dispute have I heard raging  
 high between professed "beach-combers," as  
 50

to whether the hides should be stowed "shingling," or "back-to-back and flipper-to-flipper"; upon which point there was an entire and bitter division of sentiment among the *savans*. We adopted each method at different periods of the stowing, and parties ran high in the fore-castle, some siding with "old Bill" in favor of the former, and others scouting him and relying upon "English Bob" of the  
 10 *Ayacucho*, who had been eight years in California, and was willing to risk his life and limb for the latter method. At length a compromise was effected, and a middle course of shifting the ends and backs at every lay was adopted, which worked well, and which each party granted was better than that of the other, though inferior to its own.

Having filled the ship up, in this way, to within four feet of her beams, the process of  
 20 *steering* began, by which a hundred hides are got into a place where scarce one could be forced by hand, and which presses the hides to the utmost, sometimes starting the beams of the ship,—resembling in its effects the jack-screws which are used in stowing cotton. Each morning we went ashore, and beat and brought off as many hides as we could steeve in a day, and, after breakfast, went down into the hold, where we remained at work until  
 30 night, except a short spell for dinner. The length of the hold, from stem to stern, was floored off level, and we began with raising a pile in the after part, hard against the bulkhead of the run, and filling it up to the beams, crowding in as many as we could by hand and pushing in with oars, when a large "book" was made of from twenty-five to fifty hides,  
 40 doubled at the backs, and placed one within another, so as to leave but one outside hide for the book. An opening was then made between two hides in the pile, and the back of the outside hide of the book inserted. Above and below this book were placed smooth strips of wood, well greased, called "ways," to facilitate the sliding in of the book. Two long, heavy spars, called *steeves*, made of the strongest wood, and sharpened off like a wedge at one end, were placed with their  
 50 wedge ends into the inside of the hide which was the center of the book, and to the other end of each straps were fitted, into which large

<sup>1</sup> stowing away the cargo

tackles<sup>1</sup> were hooked, composed each of two huge purchase blocks, one hooked to the strap on the end of the steeve, and the other into a dog, fastened into one of the beams, as far aft as it could be got. When this was arranged, and the ways greased upon which the book was to slide, the falls of the tackles were stretched forward, and all hands talked on, and bowed away upon them until the book was well entered, when these tackles 10 were nipped, straps and toggles clapped upon the falls, and two more luff tackles hooked on, with dogs, in the same manner; and thus, by luff upon luff, the power was multiplied, until into a pile in which one hide more could not be crowded by hand a hundred or a hundred and fifty were often driven by this complication of purchases. When the last luff was hooked on, all hands were called to the rope,—cook, steward, and 20 all,—and ranging ourselves at the falls, one behind the other, sitting down on the hides, with our heads just even with the beams, we set taut upon the tackles, and striking up a song, and all lying back at the chorus, we bowed the tackles home, and drove the large books chock in out of sight.

The sailors' songs for capstans and falls are of a peculiar kind, having a chorus at the end of each line. The burden is usually sung by 30 one alone, and, at the chorus, all hands join in,—and, the louder the noise, the better. With us, the chorus seemed almost to raise the decks of the ship, and might be heard at a great distance ashore. A song is as necessary to sailors as the drum and fife to a soldier. They must pull together as soldiers must step in time, and they can't pull in time, or pull with a will, without it. Many a time, when a 40 thing goes heavy, with one fellow yo-ho-ing, a lively song, like "Heave, to the girls!" "Nancy Ol!" "Jack Cross-tree," "Cheerly, men," &c., has put life and strength into every arm. We found a great difference in the effect of the various songs in driving in the hides. Two or three songs would be tried, one after the other, with no effect,—not an inch could be got upon the tackles, when a new song,

struck up, seemed to hit the humor of the moment, and drove the tackles "two blocks" at once. "Heave round hearty!" "Captain gone ashore!" "Dandy ship and a dandy crew," and the like, might do for common pulls, but on an emergency, when we wanted a heavy, "raise-the-dead pull," which should start the beams of the ship, there was nothing like "Time for us to go!" "Round the corner," 10 "Tally hoo ho' you know," or "Hurrah! hurrah! my hearty bullies!"

This was the most lively part of our work. A little boating and beach work in the morning, then twenty or thirty men down in a close hold, where we were obliged to sit down and slide about, passing hides, and rowing about the great steeves, tackles, and dogs, singing out at the falls, and seeing the ship filling up every day. The work was as hard as it could well be. There was not a moment's cessation from Monday morning till Saturday night, when we were generally beaten out, and glad to have a full night's rest, a wash and shift of clothes, and a quiet Sunday. During all this time—which would have startled Dr. Graham—we lived upon almost nothing but fresh beef, fried beefsteaks, three times a day,—morning, noon, and night. At morning and night we had a quart of tea to 30 each man, and an allowance of about a pound of hard bread a day, but our chief article of food was beef. A mess, consisting of six men, had a large wooden kud piled up with beefsteaks, cut thick, and fried in fat, with the grease poured over them. Round thus we sat, attacking it with our jackknives and teeth, and with the appetite of young lions, and sent back an empty kid to the galley. This was done three times a day. How many pounds 40 each man ate in a day I will not attempt to compute. A whole bullock (we ate liver and all) lasted us but four days. Such devouring of flesh, I will venture to say, is not often seen. What one man ate in a day, over a hearty man's allowance, would make an English peasant's heart leap into his mouth. Indeed, during all the time we were upon the coast, our principal food was fresh beef, and every man had perfect health, but this was a time of 50 especial devouring, and what we should have done without meat I cannot tell. Once or

<sup>1</sup> This word, when used to signify a pulley or purchase formed by blocks and a rope, is always by seamen pronounced *id. id.* [Dana's note.]

twice, when our bullocks failed, and we were obliged to make a meal upon dry bread and water, it seemed like feeding upon shavings. Light and dry, feeling unsatisfied, and, at the same time, full, we were glad to see four quarters of a bullock, just killed, swinging from the fore-top. Whatever theories may be started by sedentary men, certainly no men could have gone through more hard work and exposure for sixteen months in more perfect health, and without ailments and failings, than our ship's crew, let them have lived upon Hygeia's own baking and dressing

*Sunday, May 8th* This promised to be our last day in California. Our forty thousand hides and thirty thousand horns, besides several barrels of otter and beaver skins, were all stowed below, and the hatches calked down.<sup>1</sup> All our spare spars were taken on board and lashed, our water-casks secured, and our live stock, consisting of four bullocks, a dozen sheep, a dozen or more pigs, and three or four dozens of poultry, were all stowed away in their different quarters, the bullocks in the long-boat, the sheep in a pen on the fore hatch, the pigs in a sty under the bows of the long-boat, and the poultry in their proper coop, and the jolly-boat was full of hay for the sheep and bullocks. Our unusually large cargo, together with the stores for a five months' voyage, brought the ship channels down into the water. In addition to this, she had been steved so thoroughly, and was so bound by the compression of her cargo, forced into her by machinery so powerful, that she was like a man in a strait-jacket, and would be but a dull sailer until she had worked herself loose.

The *California* had finished discharging her cargo, and was to get under way at the same time with us. Having washed down decks and got breakfast, the two vessels lay side by side, in complete readiness for sea, our ensigns hanging from the peaks, and our tall spars

<sup>1</sup> We had also a small quantity of gold dust, which Mexicans or Indians had brought down to us from the interior. It was not uncommon for our ships to bring a little, as I have since learned from the owners. I heard rumors of gold discoveries, but they attracted little or no attention, and were not followed up. [*Dana's note*]

reflected from the glassy surface of the river, which, since sunrise, had been unbroken by a ripple. At length a few whiffs came across the water, and, by eleven o'clock the regular northwest wind set steadily in. There was no need of calling all hands, for we had all been hanging about the forecastle the whole forenoon, and were ready for a start upon the first sign of a breeze. Often we turned our eyes aft upon the captain, who was walking the deck, with every now and then a look to windward. He made a sign to the mate, who came forward, took his station deliberately between the knight-heads, cast a glance aloft, and called out "All hands, lay aloft and loose the sails!" We were half in the rigging before the order came, and never since we left Boston were the gaskets off the yards, and the rigging overhauled, in a shorter time. "All ready forward, sir!"—"All ready the main!"—"Cross-jack yards all ready, sir!"—"Lay down, all hands but one on each yard!" The yard-arm and bunt gaskets were cast off, and each sail hung by the jigger, with one man standing by the tie to let it go. At the same moment that we sprang aloft, a dozen hands sprang into the rigging of the *California*, and in an instant were all over her yards, and her sails, too, were ready to be dropped at the word. In the mean time our bow gun had been loaded and run out, and its discharge was to be the signal for dropping the sails. A cloud of smoke came out of our bows, the echoes of the gun rattled our farewell among the hills of California, and the two ships were covered, from head to foot, with their white canvas. For a few minutes all was uproar and apparent confusion, men jumping about like monkeys in the rigging; ropes and blocks flying, orders given and answered amid the confused noises of men singing out at the ropes. The topsails came to the mast-heads with "Cheerly, men!" and, in a few minutes, every sail was set, for the wind was light. The head sails were backed, the windlass came round "slip—slap" to the cry of the sailors,—"Hove short, sir," said the mate,—"Up with him!"—"Aye, aye, sir." A few hearty and long heaves, and the anchor showed its head. "Hook cat!" The fall was stretched along the decks; all hands laid hold;—"Hurrah, for the last time," said the mates;



and the anchor came to the cat-head to the tune of "Time for us to go," with a rollicking chorus. Everything was done quick, as though it was for the last time. The head yards were filled away, and our ship began to move through the water on her homeward-bound course.

The *California* had got under way at the same moment, and we sailed down the narrow bay abreast, and were just off the mouth, and, gradually drawing ahead of her, were on the point of giving her three parting cheers, when suddenly we found ourselves stopped short, and the *California* ranging fast ahead of us. A bar stretches across the mouth of the harbor, with water enough to float common vessels, but, being low in the water, and having kept well to leeward, as we were bound to the southward, we had stuck fast, while the *California*, being light, had floated over

We kept all sail on, in the hope of forcing over, but, failing in this, we hove aback, and lay waiting for the tide, which was on the flood, to take us back into the channel. This was something of a damper to us, and the captain looked not a little mortified and vexed. "This is the same place where the *Rosa* got ashore, sir," observed our red-headed second mate, most *mal-à-propos*. A malediction on the *Rosa*, and him too, was all the answer he got, and he slunk off to leeward. In a few minutes the force of the wind and the rising of the tide backed us into the stream, and we were on our way to our old anchoring-place, the tide setting swiftly up, and the ship barely manageable in the light breeze. We came to in our old berth opposite the hude-house, whose inmates were not a little surprised to see us return. We felt as though we were tied to *California*, and some of the crew swore that they never should get clear of the bloody coast.

In about half an hour, which was near high water, the order was given to man the windlass, and again the anchor was catted, but there was no song, and not a word was said about the last time. The *California* had come back on finding that we had returned, and was hove-to, waiting for us, off the point. Thus time we passed the bar safely, and were soon up with the *California*, who filled away, and kept us company. She seemed desirous of a

trial of speed, and our captain accepted the challenge, although we were loaded down to the bolts of our chain-plates, as deep as a sand-barge, and bound so taut with our cargo that we were no more fit for a race than a man in fetters, while our antagonist was in her best trim. Being clear of the point, the breeze became stiff, and the royal-masts bent under our sails, but we would not take them in until we saw three boys spring aloft into the rigging of the *California*, when they were all furled at once, but with orders to our boys to stay aloft at the top-gallant mast-heads and loose them again at the word. It was my duty to furl the fore royal, and, while standing by to loose it again, I had a fine view of the scene. From where I stood, the two vessels seemed nothing but spars and sails, while their narrow decks, far below, slanting over by the force of the wind aloft, appeared hardly capable of supporting the great fabrics raised upon them. The *California* was to windward of us, and had every advantage, yet, while the breeze was stiff, we held our own. As soon as it began to slacken, she ranged a little ahead, and the order was given to loose the royals. In an instant the gaskets were off and the hunt dropped. "Sheet home the fore royal!—Weather sheet's home!"—"Lee sheet's home!"—"Hoist away, sir!" is bawled from aloft. "Overhaul your clew-lincs!" shouts the mate. "Aye, aye, sir! all clear!"—"Taut lee-chl belay! Well the lee brace, haul taut to windward,"—and the royals are set. These brought us up again, but, the wind continuing light, the *California* set hers, and it was soon evident that she was walking away from us. Our captain then hailed, and said that he should keep off to his course, adding, "She isn't the Alert now. If I had her in your trim she would have been out of sight by this time." This was good-naturedly answered from the *California* and she braced sharp up, and stood close upon the wind up the coast, while we squared away our yards, and stood before the wind to the south-southwest. The *California's* crew manned her weather rigging, waved their hats in the air, and gave us three hearty cheers, which we answered as heartily, and the customary single cheer came back to us from over the water. She stood on her way, doomed to

eighteen months' or two years' hard service upon that hated coast, while we were making our way to our home, to which every hour and every mile was bringing us nearer.

As soon as we parted company with the *California*, all hands were sent aloft to set the studding-sails. Booms were rigged out, tacks and halyards rove, sail after sail packed upon her, until every available inch of canvas was spread, that we might not lose a breath of the fair wind. We could now see how much she was cramped and deadened by her cargo; for with a good breeze on her quarter, and every stitch of canvas spread, we could not get more

than six knots out of her. She had no more life in her than if she were water-logged. The log was hove several times; but she was doing her best. We had hardly patience with her, but the older sailors said, "Stand by! you'll see her work herself loose in a week or two, and then she'll walk up to Cape Horn like a race-horse."

When all sail had been set, and the decks cleared up, the *California* was a speck in the horizon, and the coast lay like a low cloud along the northeast. At sunset they were both out of sight, and we were once more upon the ocean, where sky and water meet.

1840

## 1823 -- George Henry Boker -- 1890

GEORGE HENRY BOKER, poet, dramatist, diplomat, was born in Philadelphia in 1823, of Quaker descent. He was a banker's son and grew up in cultivated surroundings. He was graduated from Princeton in 1842. He began to write, not as a profession but from devotion to literature. He took part in patriotic activities during the Civil War, especially as Secretary of the Union League of Philadelphia. He was minister to Turkey, 1871-1878. In 1856 he collected his lyric and narrative poetry and most of his plays in *Plays and Poems*, five times reprinted. His *Poems of the War* appeared in 1864. Several of his tragedies were produced on the stage. The material of all is intense and romantic, with mediaeval Spain and Italy favorite settings. For his masterpiece, *Francesca da Rimini* (1855), he used a story from Dante's *Inferno* and from Boccaccio, adding the character of Pepe, and supplying his own interpretations, especially that of Lanciotto, the husband, whom he made the dominating figure and an appealing one. The play was acted by E. L. Davenport in 1855, and revived by Laurence Barrett in 1882 and by Otis Skinner in 1901. A skilfully written and powerful tragedy, it takes a high place among English verse dramas of the nineteenth century. Its blank verse is attractive and musical, the plot development shows unity and coherence, and the characters are made vital.

Boker's collected *Plays and Poems* was published in Boston in 1856 (2 vols.). E. S. Bradley edited *Nydia: a Tragic Play* (1929), and *Sonnets: a Sequence on Profane Love* (not before published) (1929). The best work on Boker is E. S. Bradley's *George Henry Boker, Poet and Patriot* (1927). J. B. Hubbell contributed "G. H. Boker, P. H. Hayne, and C. W. Stoddard: Some Unpublished Letters" to *American Literature*, V (May, 1933). A. H. Quinn treated Boker in *DAB*, II (1929). See also his *A History of the American Drama* (1923), and A. G. Halline, *American Plays* (1935).

J. W. Krutch wrote of Boker in the *Sewanee Review*, XXV (Oct., 1917). For *Francesca da Rimini* see E. Brewer in the *American*, V (1883); Gertrude Urban's "Paolo and Francesca in History and Literature," *Critics*, XL (1902); and J. C. Metcalf's "An Old Romantic Triangle, Francesca da Rimini in Three Dramas," *Sewanee Review*, XXIX (1921).

## FRANCESCA DA RIMINI

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MALATESTA, *Lord of Rimini*  
GUIDO DA FOLENTA, *Lord of Ravenna*  
LANCIOTTO, *Malatesta's son*  
PAOLO, *his brother*  
PEPE, *Malatesta's jester*  
CARDINAL, *friend to Guido*  
RENE, *a troubadour*  
FRANCISCA DA RIMINI, *Guido's daughter*  
RITTA, *her maid*

Lords, Ladies, Knights, Priests, Soldiers,  
Pages and Attendants

Scene Rimini, Ravenna, and the neighborhood  
Time about 1300 A D

## ACT I

SCENE 1. *Rimini. The Garden of the Palace.*

PAOLO and a number of Noblemen are discovered, seated under an arbor, surrounded by RENE and other Troubadours, and Attendants.

PAOLO I prithee, Rene, charm our ears again

With the same song you sang me yesterday.  
Here are fresh listeners.

RENE. Really, my good lord,  
My voice is out of joint A grievous cold— [Coughs]

PAOLO. A very grievous, but convenient cold,  
Which always racks you when you would not sing.

RENE O, no, my lord! Besides, I hoped to hear

My ditty warbled into fairer ears,  
By your own lips, to better purpose, too.

[The Noblemen all laugh]

FIRST NOBLEMAN. Rene has hit it. Music runs to waste 10  
In ears like ours.

SECOND NOBLEMAN. Nay, nay, chaunt on, sweet Count.

PAOLO [coughing]. Alack! you hear, I've caught poor Rene's cough.

FIRST NOBLEMAN. That would not be, if we wore petticoats. [The others laugh.]

PAOLO. O, fie!

FIRST NOBLEMAN So runs the scandal to our ears

SECOND NOBLEMAN Confirmed by all our other senses, Count.

FIRST NOBLEMAN Witnessed by many a doleful sigh, poured out  
By many a breaking heart in Rimini.

SECOND NOBLEMAN Poor girls!

FIRST NOBLEMAN [mimicking a lady]. Sweet Count! sweet Count Paolo! O!  
Plant early violets upon my grave!  
Thus go a thousand voices to one tune 20

[The others laugh]

PAOLO. 'Ods mercy! gentlemen, you do me wrong

FIRST NOBLEMAN And by how many hundred, more or less?

PAOLO Ah! rogues, you'd shift your sins upon my shoulders.

SECOND NOBLEMAN. You'd bear them stoutly

FIRST NOBLEMAN It were vain to give Drops to god Neptune You're the sea of love

That swallows all things

SECOND NOBLEMAN We the little fish That meanly scull about within your depths

PAOLO Go on, go on! Talk yourselves fairly out [PEPE laughs without]

But, hark! here comes the fool! Fit company For this most noble company of wits! 30

[Enter PEPE, laughing violently]

Why do you laugh?

PEPE. I'm laughing at the world It has laughed long enough at me, and so I'll turn the tables Ho! ho! ho! I've heard A better joke of Uncle Malatesta's

Than any I e'er uttered. [Laughing]

ALL. Tell it, fool.

PEPE. Why, do you know—upon my life, the best

And most original idea on earth:

A joke to put in practice, too. By Jove! I'll bet my wit 'gainst the stupidity

Of the best gentlemen among you all, 40  
You cannot guess it

ALL. Tell us, tell us, fool.

PEPE. Guess it, guess it, fools.

PAOLO. Come, disclose, disclose!

PEPE. He has a match afoot.—

ALL. A match!

PEPE. A marriage.

ALL. Who?—who?

PEPE. A marriage in his family.

ALL. But, who?

PEPE. Ah! there's the point

ALL. Paolo?

PEPE. No.

FIRST NOBLEMAN. The others are well  
wived Shall we turn Turks?

PEPE. Why, there's the summit of his joke,  
good sirs

By all the sacred symbols of my art—  
By cap and bauble, by my tinkling bell—  
He means to marry Lanciotto!

[Laughs violently]

ALL [laughing] Hol— 50

PAOLO. Peace! peace! What tongue dare  
echo yon fool's laugh?

Nay, never raise your hands in wonderment.  
I'll strike the dearest friend among ye all  
Beneath my feet, as if he were a slave,  
Who dares insult my brother with a laugh!

PEPE. By Jove! ye're sad enough. Here's  
mirth's quick cure!

Pretty Paolo has a heavy fist,  
I warn you, sirs. Hol! hol! I trapped them all,  
[Laughing]

Now I'll go mar old Malatesta's message  
[Aside] [Exit]

PAOLO. Shame on ye, sirs! I have mis-  
taken you 60

I thought I harbored better friends. Poor  
fops,

Who've slept in down and satin all your  
years,

Within the circle Lanciotto charmed  
Round Rimini with his most potent sword!—  
Fellows whose brows would melt beneath a  
casque,

Whose hands would fray to grasp a brand's  
rough hilt,

Who ne'er launched more than braggart  
threats at foes!—

Girlish companions of luxurious girls!—

Danglers round troubadours' and wine-cupal  
—Men

Whose best parts are their clothes! bundles  
of silk, 70

Scented like summer! rag-men, nothing  
more!—

Creatures as generous as monkeys—brave  
As hunted hares—courteous as grinning  
apes—

Grateful as serpents—useful as lap-dogs—  
[During this, the Noblemen, etc., steal off.]

I am alone at last! So let me be,  
Till Lanciotto fill the vacant room  
Of these mean knaves, whose friendship is  
but breath. '[Exit.]'

SCENE 2. *The Same. A Hall in the  
Castle.*

[Enter MALATESTA and LANCIOTTO.]

MALATESTA. Guido, ay, Guido of Ravenna,  
son—

Down on his knees, as full of abject prayers  
For peace and mercy as a penitent.

LANCIOTTO. His old trick, father. While his  
worn arm

Is raised in seeming prayer, it only rests.  
Anon, he'll deal you such a staggering blow,  
With its recovered strength, as shall convert  
You, and not him, into a penitent.

MALATESTA. No, no, your last bout leveled  
him. He reeled,

Into Ravenna, from the battlefield, 10  
Like a stripped drunkard, and there headlong  
fell—

A mass of squalid misery, a thing  
To draw the jeering urchins. I have thus  
From faithful spies. There's not a hope re-  
mains

To break the shock of his great overthrow  
I pity Guido

LANCIOTTO. 'S death! go comfort him!  
I pity those who fought, and bled, and died,  
Before the armies of this Ghibelin.<sup>1</sup>

I pity those who halted home with wounds  
Dealt by his hand. I pity widowed eyes 20  
That he set running, maiden hearts that turn,

<sup>1</sup> The Ghibelines (also Ghibellines) were an imperial  
and aristocratic party in Italy during the Middle Ages,  
opposed to the Guelphs (Guelphs), the papal and popular  
party. The names continued in use from the twelfth  
till the fifteenth century.

Sick with despair, from ranks thinned down  
by him;  
Mothers that shriek, as the last stragglers  
flung

Their feverish bodies by the fountain-side,  
Dumb with mere thirst, and faintly point to  
him,

Answering the dame's quick questions. I  
have seen

Unburied bones, and skulls—that seemed to  
ask,

From their blank eyeholes, vengeance at my  
hand— 28

Shine in the moonlight on old battlefields,  
And even these—the happy dead, my lord—  
I pity more than Guido of Ravenna!

MALATESTA. What would you have?

LANCIOTTO. I'd see Ravenna burn,  
Flame into heaven, and scorch the flying  
clouds;

I'd choke her streets with ruined palaces;  
I'd hear her women scream with fear and  
grief,

As I have heard the maids of Rimini.  
All this I'd sprinkle with old Guido's blood,  
And bless the baptism.

MALATESTA. You are cruel.

LANCIOTTO. Not I;  
But these things ache within my fretting  
brain. 39

The sight I first beheld was from the arms  
Of my wild nurse, her husband hacked to  
death

By the fierce edges of these Ghibelins.

One cut across the neck—I see it now,  
Ay, and have mimicked it a thousand times,  
Just as I saw it, on our enemies.—

Why, that cut seemed as if it meant to bleed  
On till the judgment. My distracted nurse  
Stooped down, and paddled in the running  
gore

With her poor fingers; then a prophetic,  
Pale with the inspiration of the god, 50  
She towered aloft, and with her dripping  
hand

Three times she signed me with the holy  
cross.

'Tis all as plain as noonday. Thus she  
spoke,—

"May this spot stand till Guido's dearest  
blood

Be mingled with thy own!" The soldiers say,  
In the close battle, when my wrath is up,  
The dead man's blood flames on my vengeful  
brow

Like a red planet, and when war is o'er,  
It shrinks into my brain, defiling all 59  
My better nature with its slaughterous lusts.  
Howe'er it be, it shaped my earliest thought,  
And it will shape my last

MALATESTA. You moody churl!  
You dismal knot of superstitious dreams!  
Do you not blush to empty such a head  
Before a sober man? Why, son, the world  
Has not given o'er its laughing humor yet,  
That you should try it with such vagaries —  
Pohl

I'll get a wife to teach you common sense

LANCIOTTO A wife for me! [*Laughing*]

MALATESTA Ay, sir, a wife for you  
You shall be married, to insure your wits. 70

LANCIOTTO 'Tis not your wont to mock  
me.

MALATESTA. How now, son!  
I am not given to jesting. I have chosen  
The fairest wife in Italy for you  
You won her bravely, as a soldier should.  
And when you'd woo her, stretch your  
gauntlet out,

And crush her fingers in its steely grip  
If you will plead, I ween, she dare not say—  
No, by your leave. Should she refuse, howe'er,  
With that same iron hand you shall go knock  
Upon Ravenna's gates, till all the town 80  
Ring with your courtship. I have made her  
hand

The price and pledge of Guido's future peace

LANCIOTTO All this is done!

MALATESTA. Done, out of hand, and now  
I wait a formal answer, nothing more  
Guido dare not decline. No, by the saints,  
He'd send Ravenna's virgins here in droves,  
To buy a ten days' truce.

LANCIOTTO. Sir, let me say,  
You stretch paternal privilege too far,  
To pledge my hand without my own consent.  
Am I a portion of your household stuff, 90  
That you should trade me off to Guido thus?  
Who is the lady I am bartered for?

MALATESTA. Francesca, Guido's daughter  
—Never frown;  
It shall be so!

LANCIOTTO. By heaven, it shall not be!  
My blood shall never mingle with his race.

MALATESTA According to your nurse's  
prophecy,  
Fate orders it.

LANCIOTTO. Hal

MALATESTA Now, then, I have struck  
The chord that answers to your gloomy  
thoughts

Bah! on your sibyl and her prophecyl  
Put Guido's blood aside, and yet, I say, 100  
Marry you shall!

LANCIOTTO 'Tis most distasteful, sir

MALATESTA. Lanciotto, look ye! You brave  
gentleman,

So fond of knocking out poor people's brains,  
In time must come to have your own knocked  
out

What, then, if you bequeath us no new  
hands,

To carry on your business, and our house  
Die out for lack of princes?

LANCIOTTO Wed my brothers  
They'll rear you sons, I'll slay you enemies  
Paolo and Francesca! Note their names,  
They chime together like sweet marriage-  
bells 110

A proper match 'Tis said she's beautiful,  
And he is the delight of Rimini,—  
The pride and conscious center of all eyes,  
The theme of poets, the ideal of art,  
The earthly treasury of Heaven's best gifts!  
I am a soldier, from my very birth,  
Heaven cut me out for terror, not for love  
I had such fancies once, but now—

MALATESTA Pshaw! son,  
My faith is bound to Guido, and if you  
Do not throw off your duty, and defy, 120  
Through sickly scruples, my express com-  
mands,

You'll yield at once. No more I'll have it  
sol [Exit.]

LANCIOTTO Curses upon my destiny!  
What, I—

Hol! I have found my use at last—What, I,  
I, the great twisted monster of the wars,  
The brawny cripple, the herculean dwarf,  
The spur of panic, and the butt of scorn—  
I be a bridegroom! Heaven, was I not cursed  
More than enough, when thou didst fashion  
me

To be a type of ugliness,—a thing 130  
By whose comparison all Rimini  
Holds itself beautiful? Lol here I stand,  
A gnarled, blighted trunk! There's not a  
knave

So spindle-shanked, so wry-faced, so infirm,  
Who looks at me, and smiles not on himself.  
And I have friends to pity me—great Heaven!  
One has a favorite leg that he bewails,—  
Another sees my hip with doleful plaints,—  
A third is sorry o'er my huge swart arms,—  
A fourth aspires to mount my very hump,  
And thence harangue his weeping brother-  
hood! 141

Pahl it is nauseous! Must I further bear  
The sidelong shuddering glances of a wife?  
The degradation of a showy love,  
That over-acts, and proves the mummer's  
craft

Untouched by nature? And a fair wife, too!—  
Francesca, whom the minstrels sing about!  
Though, by my side, what woman were not  
fair?

Circe looked well among her swine, no  
doubt,

Next me, she'd pass for Venus Hol hol  
hol [Laughing.]

Would there were something merry in my  
laugh! 151

Now, in the battle, if a Ghubelin  
Cry, "Wry-hup! hunchback!" I can trample  
him

Under my stallion's hoofs; or boggle him  
Into a monstrous likeness of myself.  
But to be pitied,—to endure a sting  
Thrust in by kindness, with a sort of smile—  
'Sdeath! it is miserable!

[Enter PEPE.]

PEPE. My lord—

LANCIOTTO My fool!

PEPE. We'll change our titles when your  
bride's bells ring— 159

Ha, cousin?

LANCIOTTO Even this poor fool has eyes,  
To see the wretched plight in which I stand.

[Aside.]

How, gossip, how?

PEPE. I, being the court-fool,  
Am lord of fools by my prerogative.

LANCIOTTO. Who told you of my mar-  
riage?

PEPE. Rimuni

A frightful liar; but true for once, I fear.  
The messenger from Guido has returned,  
And the whole town is wailing over him,  
Some pity you, and some the bride, but I,  
Being more catholic, I pity both.

LANCIOTTO. Still, pity, pity! [*Aside.*] [*Bells toll*] Hal whose knell is that? 170

PEPE. Lord Malatesta sent me to the tower,  
To have the bells rung for your marriage-  
news.

How, he said not, so I, as I thought fit,  
Told the deaf sexton to ring out a knell

[*Bells toll*]

How do you like it?

LANCIOTTO. Varlet, have you bones,  
To risk their breaking? I have half a mind  
To thrash you from your modey coat!

[*Seizes him*]

PEPE. Pardee!

Respect my coxcomb, cousin Hark! ha,  
hal

[*Laughing*]

[*Bells ring a joyful peal*]

Some one has changed my music Heaven  
defend!

How the bells jangle! Yonder graybeard,  
now, 180

Rings a peal vilely. He's more used to knells,  
And sounds them grandly. Only give him  
time,

And, I'll be sworn, he'll ring your knell out  
yet

LANCIOTTO. Pepe, you are but half a fool

PEPE. My lord,

I can return the compliment in full

LANCIOTTO. So, you are ready

PEPE. Truth is always so.

LANCIOTTO. I shook you rudely, here's a  
florin. [*Offers money*]

PEPE. No

My wit is merchandise, but not my honor.

LANCIOTTO. Your honor, sirrah!

PEPE. Why not? You great lords

Have something you call lordly honor, pray,  
May not a fool have foolish honor too? 191

Cousin, you laid your hand upon my coat—  
'Twas the first sacrilege it ever knew—

And you shall pay it. Mark! I promise you.

LANCIOTTO [*laughing*]. Ha, ha! you bluster  
well. Upon my life,  
You have the ultyard jargon to a breath.

Pepe, if I should smite you on the cheek—

Thus, gossip, thus—[*Strikes him*] what  
would you then demand?

PEPE. Your life!

LANCIOTTO [*laughing*]. Ha, ha! there is the  
camp-style, too— 199

A very cutthroat air! How this shrewd fool  
Makes the puncilio of honor show!  
Change helmets into coxcombs, swords to  
baubles,

And what a figure is poor chivalry!

Thanks for your lesson, Pepe! [*Exit*]

PEPE. Ere I'm done,

You'll curse as heartily, you limping beast!  
Ha! so we go—Lord Lanciotto, look!

[*Walks about, mimicking him.*]

Here is a leg and camel-back, forsooth,  
To match your honor and nobility!  
You miscreated scarecrow, dare you shake,  
Or strike in jest, a natural man like me?—  
You cursed lump, you chaos of a man, 211  
To buffet one whom Heaven pronounces  
good! [*Bells ring*]

There go the bells rejoicing over you  
I'll change them back to the old knell again  
You marry, faugh! Beget a race of elves,  
Wed a she-crocodile, and keep within  
The limits of your nature! Here we go,  
Tripping along to meet our promised bride,  
Like a rheumatic elephant!—ha, ha!

[*Laughing*]

[*Exit, mimicking* LANCIOTTO]

SCENE 3 *The Same. A Room in the Same*

[*Enter LANCIOTTO, hastily.*]

LANCIOTTO. Why do these prodigies en-  
viron me?

In ancient Rome, the words a fool might  
drop,

From the confusion of his vagrant thoughts,  
Were held as omens, prophecies, and men  
Who made earth tremble with majestic deeds,  
Trembled themselves at fortune's lightest  
threat

I like it not. My father named this match  
While I boiled over with vindictive wrath  
Towards Guido and Ravenna. Straight my  
heart

Sank down like lead, a weakness seized on  
me, 10

A dismal gloom that I could not resist;  
I lacked the power to take my stand, and  
say—

Bluntly, I will not! Am I in the toils?  
Has fate so weakened me, to work its end?  
There seems a fascination in it, too,—  
A morbid craving to pursue a thing  
Whose issue may be fatal Would that I  
Were in the wars again! These mental weeds  
Grow on the surface of macive peace.

I'm haunted by myself Thought preys on  
thought 20  
My mind seems crowded in the hideous  
mould

That shaped my body. What a fool am I  
To bear the burden of my wretched life,  
To sweat and toil under the world's broad  
eye,  
Climb into fame, and find myself—O,  
what?—

A most conspicuous monster! Crown my  
head,

Pile Caesar's purple on me—and what then?  
My hump shall shorten the imperial robe,  
My leg peep out beneath the scanty hem,  
My broken hip shall twist the gown awry, 30  
And pomp, instead of dignifying me,  
Shall be by me made quite ridiculous.  
The faintest coward would not bear all this—  
Prodigious courage must be mine, to live,  
To die asks nothing but weak will, and I  
Feel like a craven Let me skulk away  
Ere life o'ertask me. [*Offers to stab himself.*]

[*Enter PAOLO*]

PAOLO [*seizing his hand*]. Brother! what is  
this?  
Lanciotto, are you mad? Kind Heaven! look  
here—  
Straight in my eyes Now answer, do you  
know 39  
How near you were to murder? Dare you bend  
Your wicked hand against a heart I love?  
Were it for you to mourn your wilful death,  
With such a bitterness as would be ours,  
The wish would ne'er have crossed you.  
While we're bound  
Life into life, a chain of loving hearts,  
Were it not base in you, the middle link,  
To snap, and scatter all? Shame, brother,  
shamel

I thought you better metal.

LANCIOTTO. Spare your words.

I know the seasons of our human grief,  
And can predict them without almanac. 50  
A few sobs o'er the body, and a few  
Over the coffin, then a sigh or two,  
Whose windy passage dries the hanging tear;  
Perchance, some wandering memories, some  
regrets,

Then a vast influx of consoling thoughts—  
Based on the trials of the sadder days  
Which the dead missed, and then a smiling  
face

Turned on tomorrow. Such is mortal grief.  
It writes its histories within a span,  
And never lives to read them.

PAOLO. Lanciotto,  
I heard the bells of Rumi, just now, 61  
Exulting o'er your coming marriage-day,  
While you conspire to teach them gloomier  
sounds.

Why are you sad?

LANCIOTTO. Paolo, I am wretched;  
Sad's a faint word. But of my marriage-  
bells—

Heard you the knell that Pepe rang?

PAOLO. 'Twas strange:  
A sullen antic of his crabbed wit.

LANCIOTTO. It was portentous. All dumb  
things find tongues

Against this marriage. As I passed the hall,  
My armor glittered on the wall, and I 70  
Paused by the harness, as before a friend  
Whose well-known features slack our hur-  
ried gait;

Francesca's name was fresh upon my mind,  
So I half-uttered it. Instant, my sword  
Leaped from its scabbard, as with sudden  
life,

Plunged down and pierced into the oaken  
floor,

Shivering with fear! Lo! while I gazed upon  
it—

Doubting the nature of the accident—  
Around the point appeared a spot of blood,  
Oozing upon the floor, that spread and  
spread— 80

As I stood gasping by in speechless horror—  
Ring beyond ring, until the odious tide  
Crawled to my feet, and lapped them, like the  
tongues



Of angry serpents! O, my God! I fled  
At the first touch of the infernal stain!  
Go—you may see—go to the hall!

PAOLO. Fiel man,  
You have been ever played on in this sort  
By your wild fancies When your heart is  
high,  
You make them playthings; but in lower  
moods, 89

They seem to sap the essence of your soul,  
And drain your manhood to its poorest dregs.

LANCIOTTO. Go look, go look!

PAOLO [*goes to the door, and returns*]. There  
sticks the sword, indeed

Just as your tread detached it from its sheath,  
Looking more like a blessed cross, I think,  
Than a bad omen. As for blood—Ha, ha!

[*Laughing*]

It sets mine dancing. Pshaw! away with this!  
Deck up your face with smiles. Go trim your-  
self

For the young bride New velvet, gold, and  
gems, 98

Do wonders for us Brother, come; I'll be  
Your tiring-man, for once

LANCIOTTO. Array this lump—

Paolo, hark! There are some human thoughts  
Best left imprisoned in the aching heart,  
Lest the freed malefactors should dispread  
Infamous ruin with their liberty

There's not a man—the fairest of ye all—  
Who is not fouler than he seems. This life

Is one unending struggle to conceal  
Our baseness from our fellows Here stands  
one

In vestal whiteness with a lecher's lust;—  
There sits a judge, holding law's scales in  
hands 110

That rich to take the bribe he dare not  
touch,—

Here goes a priest, with heavenward eyes,  
whose soul

Is Satan's council-chamber;—there a doctor,  
With nature's secrets wrinkled round a brow  
Guilty with conscious ignorance;—and here  
A soldier rivals Hector's bloody deeds—  
Outdoes the devil in audacity— 117

With craven longings fluttering in a heart  
That dares do aught but fly! Thus are we all  
Mere slaves and almsmen to a scornful world,  
That takes us at our seeming.

PAOLO. Say 'tis true;

What do you drive at?

LANCIOTTO. At myself, full tilt.

I, like the others, am not what I seem.

Men call me gentle, courteous, brave—They  
lie!

I'm harsh, rude, and a coward. Had I nerve  
To cast my devils out upon the earth,  
I'd show this laughing planet what a hell  
Of envy, malice, cruelty, and scorn, 128  
It has forced back to canker in the heart  
Of one poor cripple!

PAOLO. Hal

LANCIOTTO. Ay, now 'tis out!

A word I never breathed to man before  
Can you, who are a miracle of grace,  
Feel what it is to be a wreck like me?  
Paolo, look at me Is there a line,  
In my whole bulk of wretched contraries,  
That nature in a nightmare ever used  
Upon her shapes till now? Find me the man,  
Or beast, or tree, or rock, or nameless thing,  
So out of harmony with all things else, 139  
And I'll go raving with bare happiness,—  
Ay, and I'll marry Helena of Greece,  
And swear I do her honor!

PAOLO. Lanciotto,

I, who have known you from a stripling up,  
Never observed, or, if I did, ne'er weighed  
Your special difference from the rest of men.  
You're not Apollo—

LANCIOTTO. Nol

PAOLO. Nor yet are you  
A second Pluto Could I change with you—  
My graces for your nobler qualities—  
Your strength, your courage, your renown—  
by heaven, 149

We'd e'en change persons, to the finest hair  
LANCIOTTO. You should be flatterer to an  
emperor.

PAOLO. I am but just. Let me beseech you,  
brother,

To look with greater favor on yourself,  
Nor suffer misty phantoms of your brain  
To take the place of sound realities.  
Go to Ravenna, wed your bride, and lull  
Your cruel delusions in domestic peace.  
Ghosts fly a fireside: 'tis their wont to stalk  
Through empty houses, and through empty  
hearts.

I know Francesca will be proud of you 160

Women admire you heroes. Rusty sages,  
Pale poets, and scarred warriors, have been  
Their idols ever, while we fair plump fools  
Are elbowed to the wall, or only used  
For vacant pastime.

LANCIOITTO. To Ravenna?—no!  
In Rimini they know me; at Ravenna .  
I'd be a new-come monster, and exposed  
To curious wonder. There will be parade  
Of all the usual follies of the state,  
Fellows with trumpets, unselled coats, and  
wands, 170  
Would strut before me, like vain moun-  
te-banks  
Before their monkeys Then, I should be  
stared

Out of my modesty, and when they look,  
How can I tell if 'tis the bridegroom's face  
Or hump that draws their eyes? I will not go  
To please you all, I'll marry, but to please  
The wonder-mongers of Ravenna—Hal  
Paolo, now I have it You shall go,  
To bring Francesca, and you'll speak of me,  
Not as I ought to be, but as I am 180  
If she draw backward, give her rein, and say  
That neither Guido nor herself shall feel  
The weight of my displeasure You may say,  
I pity her—

PAOLO For what?

LANCIOITTO For wedding me  
In sooth, she'll need it. Say—

PAOLO Nay, Lanciotto,  
I'll be a better orator in your behalf,  
Without your promptings

LANCIOITTO She is fair, 'tis said,  
And, dear Paolo, if she please your eye,  
And move your heart to anything like love,  
Wed her yourself The peace would stand as  
firm 190

By such a match.

PAOLO [*laughing*] Hal that is right be  
gay!

Ply me with jokes! I'd rather see you smile  
Than see the sun shine.

LANCIOITTO. I am serious,  
I'll find another wife, less beautiful,  
More on my level, and—

PAOLO. An empress, brother,  
Were honored by your hand. You are by  
much  
Too humble in your reckoning of yourself

I can count virtues in you, to supply  
Half Italy, if they were parcelled out.  
Look up!

LANCIOITTO. I cannot: Heaven has bent me  
down. 200

To you, Paolo, I could look, however,  
Were my hump made a mountain. Bless him,  
God!

Pour everlasting bounties on his head!  
Make Croesus jealous of his treasury,  
Achilles of his arms, Endymion  
Of his fresh beauties,—though the coy one lay,  
Blushing beneath Diana's earliest kiss,  
On grassy Latmos; and may every good,  
Beyond man's sight, though in the ken of  
Heaven,

Round his fair fortune to a perfect end! 210  
O, you have dried the sorrow of my eyes,  
My heart is beating with a lighter pulse;  
The air is musical, the total earth  
Puts on new beauty, and within the arms  
Of girdling ocean dreams her time away,  
And visions bright tomorrows!

[*Enter MALATESTA and PEPE.*]

MALATESTA. Mount, to horse!  
PEPE [*aside*] Good Lord! he's smiling!

What's the matter now?

Has anybody broken a leg or back?  
Has a more monstrous monster come to life?  
Is hell burst open?—heaven burnt up? What,  
what 220

Can make yon eyesore grin?—I say, my lord,  
What cow has calved?

PAOLO. Your mother, by the bleat.

PEPE. Right fairly answered—for a gentle-  
man!

When did you take my trade up?

PAOLO. When your wit

Went begging, sirrah.

PEPE Well again! My lord,

I think he'll do.

MALATESTA. For what?

PEPE. To take my place.

Once fools were rare, and then my office sped,  
But now the world is overrun with them  
One gets one's fool in one's own family,  
Without much searching.

MALATESTA. Pepe, gently now  
Lanciotto, you are waited for. The train 231  
Has passed the gate, and halted there for you.

LANCIOTTO. I go not to Ravenna.

MALATESTA Hey! why not?

PAOLO. For weighty reasons, father. Will you trust

Your greatest captain, hope of all the Gueifs,  
With crafty Guido? Should the Ghibelins  
Break faith, and shut Lanciotto in their walls—  
Sure the temptation would be great enough—  
What would you do?

MALATESTA. I'd eat Ravenna up!

PEPE. Lord! what an appetite!

PAOLO. But Lanciotto  
Would be a precious hostage.

MALATESTA. True, you're wise.  
Guido's a fox. Well, have it your own way  
What is your plan?

PAOLO. I go there in his place

MALATESTA. Good! I will send a letter with  
the news. 244

LANCIOTTO. I thank you, brother

[*Apart to PAOLO.*]

PEPE. Ha! ha! ha!—O! O! [*Laughing*]

MALATESTA. Pepe, what now?

PEPE. O! lord, O!—hol hol hol  
[*Laughing*]

PAOLO. Well, giggler?

PEPE. Hear my fable, uncle.

MALATESTA Ay

PEPE. Once on a time, Vulcan sent Mercury  
To fetch dame Venus from a romp in heaven  
Well, they were long in coming, as he thought,  
And so the god of spits and gridirons 251  
Railed like himself—the devil But—now  
mark—

Here comes the moral. In a little while,  
Vulcan grew proud, because he saw plain  
signs

That he should be a father, and so he  
Strutted through hell, and pushed the devils  
by,

Like a magnifico of Venice Ere long,  
His heir was born, but then—hol hol!—the  
brat

Had wings upon his heels, and thievish  
ways,

And a vile squint, like errant Mercury's,  
Which honest Vulcan could not understand;—  
Can you?

PAOLO. 'Sdeath! fool, I'll have you in the  
stocks 262

Father, your fool exceeds his privilege.

PEPE [*apart to PAOLO*]. Keep your own  
bounds, Paolo. In the stocks

I'd tell more fables than you'd wish to hear.  
And so ride forth. But, cousin, don't forget  
To take Lanciotto's picture to the bride.  
Ask her to choose between it and yourself  
I'll count the moments, while she hesitates,  
And not grow gray at it

PAOLO. Peace, varlet, peace!

PEPE [*apart to him*] Ah, now I have it.

There's an elephant 271

Upon the scutcheon, show her that, and say—  
Here's Lanciotto in our heraldry!

PAOLO. Here's for your counsel

[*Strikes PEPE, who runs behind MALA-  
TESTA*]

MALATESTA. Son, son, have a care!  
We who keep piers must bear their pecks  
sometimes

Poor knave! Ha! ha! thou'rt growing vil-  
laneous [*Laughs and pats PEPE*]

PEPE. Another blow! another life for that!  
[*Aside*]

PAOLO. Farewell, Lanciotto You are dull  
again

LANCIOTTO. Nature will rule

MALATESTA. Come, come!

LANCIOTTO. God speed you, brother!  
I am too sad, my smiles all turn to sighs 280

PAOLO. More cause to haste me on my  
happy work. [*Exit with MALATESTA.*]

PEPE. I'm going, cousin.

LANCIOTTO. Go.

PEPE. Pray, ask me where

LANCIOTTO. Where, then?

PEPE. To have my jewel carried home  
And, as I'm wise, the carrier shall be  
A thief, a thief, by Jove! The fashion's new  
[*Exit*]

LANCIOTTO. In truth, I am too gloomy and  
irrational.

Paolo must be right. I always had  
These moody hours and dark presentments,  
Without mischances following after them.  
The camp is my abode. A neighing steed,  
A fiery onset, and a stubborn fight, 291  
Rouse my dull blood, and tire my body  
down

To quiet slumbers when the day is o'er,  
And night above me spreads her spangled  
tent,

Lit by the dying cresset of the moon.  
Ay, that is it; I'm homesick for the camp  
[Exit.]

ACT II

SCENE I. *Ravenna. A Room in GUIDO's Palace.*

[Enter GUIDO and a CARDINAL.]

CARDINAL. I warn thee, Count  
GUIDO. I'll take the warning, father,  
On one condition: show me but a way  
For safe escape.

CARDINAL. I cannot.

GUIDO. There's the point  
We Ghibelins are fettered hand and foot.  
There's not a florin in my treasury;  
Not a lame soldier, I can lead to war,  
Not to man the walls. A present siege,  
Pushed with the wonted heat of Lanciotto,  
Would deal Ravenna such a mortal blow 9  
As ages could not mend. Give me but time  
To fill the drained arteries of the land  
The Guelfs are masters, we their slaves, and  
we

Were wiser to confess it, ere the lash  
Teach it too sternly. It is well for you  
To say you love Francesca. So do I,  
But neither you nor I have any voice  
For or against this marriage

CARDINAL. 'Tis too true

GUIDO. Say we refuse. Why, then, before a  
week,

We'll hear Lanciotto rapping at our door,  
With twenty hundred ruffians at his back 20  
What's to say then? My lord, we waste our  
breath

Let us look fortune in the face, and draw  
Such comfort from the wanton as we may.

CARDINAL. And yet I fear—

GUIDO. You fear! and so do I.  
I fear Lanciotto as a soldier, though,  
More than a son-in-law

CARDINAL. But have you seen him?

GUIDO. Ay, ay, and felt him, too. I've seen  
him ride

The best battalions of my horse and foot  
Down like mere stubble. I have seen his  
sword 29

Hollow a square of pikemen, with the ease  
You'd scoop a melon out.

CARDINAL. Report declares him  
A prodigy of strength and ugliness

GUIDO. Were he the devil—But why talk  
of this?—

Here comes Francesca.

CARDINAL. Ah, unhappy child!  
GUIDO. Look you, my lord! you'll make  
the best of it,

You will not whimper. Add your voice to  
mine,

Or woe to poor Ravenna!

[Enter FRANCESCA and RITTA.]

FRANCESCA. Hal my lord—  
And you, my father!—But do I intrude  
Upon your counsels? How severe you look!  
Shall I retire?

GUIDO. No, no

FRANCESCA. You moody men 40  
Seem leagued against me. As I passed the  
hall,

I met your solemn Dante, with huge strides  
Pacing in measure to his stately verse  
The sweeping sleeves of his broad scarlet  
robe

Blew out behind, like wide-expanded wings,  
And seemed to buoy him in his level flight.  
Thinking to pass, without disturbing him,  
I stole on tiptoe, but the poet paused,  
Subsiding into man, and steadily  
Bent on my face the luster of his eyes 50  
Then, taking both my trembling hands in  
his—

You know how his God-troubled forehead  
awes—

He looked into my eyes, and shook his head,  
As if he dared not speak of what he saw,  
Then muttered, sighed, and slowly turned  
away

The weight of his intolerable brow.

When I glanced back, I saw him, as before,  
Sailing adown the hall on outspread wings.  
Indeed, my lord, he should not do these  
things.

They strain the weakness of mortality 60  
A jot too far. As for poor Ritta, she  
Fled like a doe, the truant.

RITTA. Yes, forsooth!  
There's something terrible about the man.  
Ugh! if he touched me, I should turn to ice.  
I wonder if Count Lanciotto looks—

GUIDO. Ritta, come here.

[*Takes her apart.*]

RITTA. My lord.

GUIDO. 'Twas my command,  
You should say nothing of Count Lanciotto

RITTA. Nothing, my lord

GUIDO. You have said nothing then?

RITTA. Indeed, my lord

GUIDO. 'Tis well Some year ago,  
My daughter had a very silly maid, 70  
Who told her sillier stories So, one day,  
This maiden whispered something I forbade—  
In strictest confidence, for she was sly  
What happened, think you?

RITTA. I know not, my lord.

GUIDO. I boiled her in a pot.

RITTA. Good heaven! my lord.

GUIDO. She did not like it. I shall keep  
that pot

Ready for the next boiling

[*Walks back to the others.*]

RITTA. Saints above!  
I wonder if he ate her! Boil me—me!  
I'll roast or stew with pleasure, but to boil  
Implies a want of tenderness,—or rather 80  
A downright toughness—in the matter boiled  
That's slanderous to a maiden. What, boil  
me—

Boil me! O! mercy, how ridiculous!

[*Retires, laughing*]

[*Enter a MESSENGER*]

MESSENGER. Letters, my lord, from great  
Prince Malatesta

[*Presents them, and exits*]

GUIDO [*aside*]. Hear him, ye gods!—  
"from great Prince Malatesta!"

Greeting, no doubt, his little cousin Guido.  
Well, well, just so we seesaw up and down.

[*Reads*]

"*Fearing our treachery,*"—by heaven, that's  
blunt,

And Malatesta-like!—"he will not send  
His son, Lanciotto, to Ravenna, but"— 90

But what?—a groom, a porter? or will he  
Have his prey sent him in an iron cage?  
By Jove, he shall not have her! O! no, no,  
"He sends his younger son, the Count Paolo,  
To fetch Francesca back to Rimini."

That's well, if he had left his reasons out.  
And, in a postscript—by the saints, 'tis droll!—

"'T would not be worth your lordship's while, to  
shut

Paolo in a prison; for, my lord,  
I'll only pay his ransom in plain steel 100  
*Besides, he's not worth having.*" Is there one,  
Save this ignoble offshoot of the Goths,  
Who'd write such garbage to a gentleman?  
Take that, and read it.

[*Gives letter to CARDINAL*]

CARDINAL. I have done the most.  
She seems suspicious.

GUIDO. Ritta's work

CARDINAL. Farewell! [*Exit*]

FRANCESCA. Father, you seem distempered

GUIDO. No, my child,

I am but vexed Your husband's on the road,  
Close to Ravenna What's the time of day?

FRANCESCA. Past noon, my lord.

GUIDO. We must be stirring, then.

FRANCESCA. I do not like this marriage

GUIDO. But I do.

FRANCESCA. But I do not. Pohl! to be  
given away, 111

Like a fine horse or falcon, to a man  
Whose face I never saw!

RITTA. That's it, my lady

GUIDO. Ritta, run down, and see if my  
great pot

Boils to your liking.

RITTA [*aside*]. O! that pot again!

My lord, my heart betrays me, but you know  
How true 'tis to my lady. [*Exit*]

FRANCESCA. What ails Ritta?

GUIDO. The ailing of your sex, a running  
tongue

Francesca, 'tis too late to beat retreat.  
Old Malatesta has me—you, too, child—  
Safe in his clutch If you are not content, 121  
I must unclothe Ravenna, and allow  
His son to take you Pohl, pohl! have a soul  
Equal with your estate A prince's child  
Cannot choose husbands. Her desires must  
aim,

Not at herself, but at the public good.

Both as your prince and father, I command,  
As subject and good daughter, you'll obey

FRANCESCA. I knew that it must be my  
destiny,

Some day, to give my hand without my  
heart;

But— 130

GUIDO. But, and I will but you back again!  
When Guido da Polenta says to you,  
Daughter, you must be married,—what were  
best?

FRANCESCA. 'Twere best Francesca, of the  
selfsame name,  
Made herself bridal-garments. [Laughing.]  
GUIDO. Right!

FRANCESCA. My lord,  
Is Lanciotto handsome—ugly—fair—  
Black—sallow—crabbed—kind—or what is  
he?

GUIDO. You'll know ere long I could not  
alter him,  
To please your taste

FRANCESCA. You always put me off,  
You never have a whisper in his praise 140

GUIDO. The world reports it—Count my  
soldier's scars,  
And you may sum Lanciotto's glories up

FRANCESCA. I shall be dutiful, to please  
you, father

If aught befall me through my blind sub-  
mission,

Though I may suffer, you must bear the sin  
Beware, my lord, for your own peace of  
mind!

My part has been obedience, and now  
I play it over to complete my task, 148  
And it shall be with smiles upon my lips,—  
Heaven only knows with what a sinking  
heart! [Exeunt]

SCENE 2. *The Same Before the Gates of the  
City. The walls hung with banners and  
flowers, etc., and crowded with citizens. At  
the side of the scene is a canopied dais, with  
chairs of state upon it. Music, bells, shouts,  
and other sounds of rejoicing, are occasionally  
heard.*

[Enter GUIDO, the CARDINAL, Noblemen,  
Knights, Guards, etc., with banners and  
arms, etc.]

GUIDO. My lord, I'll have it so. You talk  
in vain  
Paolo is a marvel in his way.  
I've seen him often. If Francesca take  
A fancy to his beauty, all the better;  
For she may think that he and Lanciotto  
Are like as blossoms of one parent branch.

In truth, they are, so far as features go—  
Heaven help the rest! Get her to Rimini,  
By any means, and I shall be content.  
The fraud cannot last long; but long enough  
To win her favor to the family. 11

CARDINAL. 'Tis a dull trick. Thou hast  
not dealt with her

Wisely nor kindly, and I dread the end.  
If, when this marriage was enjoined on thee,  
Thou hadst informed Francesca of the truth,  
And said, Now, daughter, choose between  
Thy peace and all Ravenna's, who that knows  
The constant nature of her noble heart  
Could doubt the issue? There'd have been  
some tears, 19

Some frightful fancies of her husband's looks,  
And then she'd calmly walk up to her fate,  
And bear it bravely. Afterwards, perchance,  
Lanciotto might prove better than her fears,—  
No one denies him many an excellence,—  
And all go happily. But, as thou wouldst plot,  
She'll be prepared to see a paragon,  
And find a satyr. It is dangerous.  
Treachery with enemies is bad enough,  
With friends 'us fatal

GUIDO. Has your lordship done?  
CARDINAL. Never, Count Guido, with so  
good a text 30

Do not stand looking sideways at the truth,  
Craft has become thy nature. Go to her  
GUIDO. I have not heart.

CARDINAL. I have. [Going]  
GUIDO. Hold, Cardinal!

My plan is better. Get her off my hands,  
And I care not.

CARDINAL. What will she say of thee,  
In Rimini, when she detects the cheat?

GUIDO. I'll stop my ears up.

CARDINAL. Guido, thou art weak,  
And lack the common fortitude of man.

GUIDO. And you abuse the license of your  
garb,

To lessen me. My lord, I do not dare 40  
To move a finger in these marriage-rites.

Francesca is a sacrifice, I know,—  
A limb delivered to the surgeon's knife,  
To save our general health. A truce to this.  
Paolo has the business in his hands  
Let him arrange it as he will, for I  
Will give Count Malatesta no pretext  
To recommence the war.

CARDINAL.

Farewell, my lord.

I'll neither help nor countenance a fraud.

You crafty men take comfort to yourselves,  
Saying, deceit dies with discovery 51'Tis false; each wicked action spawns a brood,  
And lives in its succession You, who shake  
Man's moral nature into storm, should know  
That the last wave which passes from your  
sight

Rolls in and breaks upon eternity! [Exit]

GUIDO. Why, that's a very grand and  
solemn thought:

I'll mention it to Dante Gentlemen,

What see they from the wall?

NOBLEMEN. The train, my lord.

GUIDO Inform my daughter

NOBLEMEN She is here, my lord.

[Enter FRANCESCA, RITTA, Ladies and Attendants]

FRANCESCA. See, father, what a merry face  
I have, 61And how my ladies glisten! I will try  
To do my utmost, in my love for you  
And the good people of Ravenna. Now,  
As the first shock is over, I expect  
To feel quite happy. I will wed the Count,  
Be he whate'er he may. I do not speak  
In giddy recklessness. I've weighed it all,—  
'Twixt hope and fear, knowledge and ig-  
norance,—And reasoned out my duty to your wish. 70  
I have no yearnings towards another love:  
So, if I show my husband a desire  
To fill the place with which he honors me,  
According to its duties, even he—  
Were he less noble than Count Lanciotto—  
Must smile upon my efforts, and reward  
Good will with willing grace One pang  
remains.Parting from home and kindred is a thing  
None but the heartless, or the miserable, 79  
Can do without a tear This home of mine  
Has filled my heart with two-fold happiness,  
Taking and giving love abundantly.  
Farewell, Ravenna! If I bless thee not,  
'Tis that thou seem'st too blessed, and 'twere  
strange

In me to offer what thou'st always given.

GUIDO [aside] This is too much! If she  
would rail a while

At me and fortune, it could be endured.

[Shouts, music, etc. within.]

FRANCESCA. Hal there's the van just break-  
ing through the wood!  
Music! that's well, a welcome forerunner.  
Now, Ritta—here—come talk to me. Alas!  
How my heart trembles! What a world to me  
Lies 'neath the glitter of yon cavalcade! 9a  
Is that the Count?

RITTA. Upon the dapple-gray?

FRANCESCA. Yes, yes.

RITTA. No, that's his—

GUIDO [apart to her]. Rittal

RITTA. Ay, that's—that's—

GUIDO Ritta, the pot! [Apart to her.]

RITTA. O! but this lying chokes! [Aside]  
Ay, that's Count Somebody, from Rimini.FRANCESCA I knew it was Is that not  
glorious?

RITTA My lady, what?

FRANCESCA. To see a cavalier  
Sit on his steed with such familiar grace 99  
RITTA. To see a man astraddle on a horse!  
It don't seem much to meFRANCESCA Fie, stupid girl!  
But mark! the minstrels thronging round the  
Count!Ahl that is more than gallant horsemanship.  
The soul that feeds itself on poesy,  
Is of a quality more fine and rare  
Than Heaven allows the ruder multitude.I tell you, Ritta, when you see a man  
Beloved by poets, made the theme of song,  
And chaunted down to ages, as a gift 109  
Fit for the rich embalmment of their verse,  
There's more about him than the patron's  
goldIf that's the gentleman my father chose,  
He must have picked him out from all the  
world.The Count alights. Why, what a noble grace  
Runs through his slightest action! Are you  
sad?You too, my father? Have I given you cause?  
I am content. If Lanciotto's mind  
Bear any unpress of his fair outside,  
We shall not quarrel ere our marriage-day  
Can I say more? My blushes speak for me—  
Interpret them as modesty's excuse 121  
For the shortcomings of a maiden's speech.

RITTA. Alas! dear lady! [Aside.]

GUIDO [*aside*]. 'Sdeath! my plot has failed,  
By overworking its design. Come, come;  
Get to your places. See, the Count draws nigh

[GUIDO and FRANCESCA *seat themselves upon the dais, surrounded by RITTA, Ladies, Attendants, Guards, etc. Music, shouts, ringing of bells. Enter Men-at-arms, with banners, etc., Pages bearing costly presents on cushions, then PAOLO, surrounded by Noblemen, Knights, Minstrels, etc., and followed by other Men-at-arms. They range themselves opposite the dais.*]

GUIDO. Ravenna welcomes you, my lord,  
and I

Add my best greeting to the general voice.  
This peaceful show of arms from Rimini  
Is a new pleasure, stranger to our sense 129  
Than if the East blew zephyrs, or the balm  
Of Summer loaded rough December's gales,  
And turned his snows to roses.

PAOLO Noble sir,  
We looked for welcome from your courtesy,  
Not from your love, but thus unhopèd for  
sight

Of smiling faces, and the gentle tone  
In which you greet us, leave us naught to win  
Within your hearts I need not ask, my lord,  
Where bides the precious object of my  
search,

For I was sent to find the fairest maid  
Ravenna boasts, among her many fair 140  
I might extend my travel many a league,  
And yet return, to take her from your side  
I blush to bear so rich a treasure home,  
As pledge and hostage of a sluggish peace,  
For beauty such as hers was meant by Heaven  
To spur our race to gallant enterprise,  
And draw contending deities around  
The dubious battles of a second Troy

GUIDO. Sir Count, you please to lavish  
on my child

The high-strained courtesy of chivalry, 150  
Yet she has homely virtues that, I hope,  
May take a deeper hold in Rimini,  
After the fleeting beauty of her face  
Is spoiled by time, or faded to the eye  
By its familiar usage.

PAOLO. As a man  
'Who ever sees Heaven's purpose in its works,  
I must suppose so rare a tabernacle

Was framed for rarest virtues. Pardon me  
My public admiration If my praise  
Clash with propriety, and bare my words 160  
To cooler judgment, 'tis not that I wish  
To win a flatterer's grudging recompense,  
And gain by falsehood what I'd win through  
love

When I have brushed my travel from my garb,  
I'll pay my court in more befitting style.

[*Music Exit with his train.*]

GUIDO [*advancing*]. Now, by the saints,  
Lanciotto's deputy  
Stands in this business with a proper grace,  
Stretching his lord's instructions till they  
crack

A zealous envoy! Not a word said he  
Of Lanciotto—not a single word; 170  
But stood there, staring in Francesca's face  
With his devouring eyes—By Jupiter,  
I but half like it!

FRANCESCA [*advancing*]. Father?

GUIDO. Well, my child.

FRANCESCA. How do you like—

GUIDO. The coxcomb I've  
done well!

FRANCESCA. No, no, Count Lanciotto?

GUIDO. Well enough.

But hang this fellow—hang your deputies!  
I'll never woo by proxy.

FRANCESCA. Deputies!

And woo by proxy!

GUIDO. Come to me anon.

I'll strip this cuckoo of his gallantry!

[*Exit with Guards, etc.*]

FRANCESCA. Ritta, my father has strange  
ways of late. 180

RITTA. I wonder not.

FRANCESCA. You wonder not?

RITTA. No, lady:

He is so used to playing double games,  
That even you must come in for your share  
Plague on his boiling! I will out with it.

[*Aside.*]

Lady, the gentleman who passed the gates—

FRANCESCA. Count Lanciotto? As I hope  
for grace,

A gallant gentleman! How well he spokel  
With what sincere and earnest courtesy  
The rounded phrases glided from his lips!  
He spoke in compliments that seemed like  
truth. 190



Medhinks I'd listen through a summer's day,  
To hear him woo.—And he must woo to  
me—

I'll have our privilege—he must woo a space,  
Ere I'll be won, I promise.

RITTA. But, my lady,  
He'll woo you for another.

FRANCESCA. He?—hal hal! [*Laughing*]  
I should not think it from the prologue,  
Ritta.

RITTA. Nor I.

FRANCESCA. Nor any one

RITTA. 'Tis not the Count—  
'Tis not Count Lanciotto

FRANCESCA. Gracious saints!  
Have you gone crazy? Ritta, speak again,  
Before I chide you

RITTA. 'Tis the solemn truth  
That gentleman is Count Paolo, lady, 201  
Brother to Lanciotto, and no more  
Like him than—than—

FRANCESCA. Than what?

RITTA. Count Guido's pot,  
For boiling waiting-maids, is like the bath  
Of Venus on the arras.

FRANCESCA. Are you mad,—  
Quite mad, poor Ritta?

RITTA. Yes, perhaps I am,  
Perhaps Lanciotto is a proper man—  
Perhaps I lie—perhaps I speak the truth—  
Perhaps I gabble like a fool O! heavens, 209  
That dreadful pot!

FRANCESCA. Dear Ritta!—

RITTA. By the mass,  
They shall not cozen you, my gentle mistress!  
If my lord Guido boiled me, do you think  
I should be served up to the garrison,  
By way of portage? Surely they would not  
waste me.

FRANCESCA. You are an idle talker Pranks  
like these

Fit your companions. You forget yourself.

RITTA. Not you, though, lady Boldly I  
repeat,

That he who looked so fair, and talked so  
sweet,

Who rode from Rimini upon a horse  
Of dapple-gray, and walked through yonder  
gate, 220

Is not Count Lanciotto.

FRANCESCA. This you mean?

RITTA. I do, indeed!

FRANCESCA. Then I am more  
abused—

More tricked, more trifled with, more played  
upon—

By him, my father, and by all of you,  
Than anything, suspected of a heart,  
Was ever yet!

RITTA. In Count Paolo, lady,  
Perchance there was no meditated fraud.

FRANCESCA. How, dare you plead for  
him?

RITTA. I but suppose  
Though in your father—O! I dare not say  
FRANCESCA. I dare. It was ill usage, gross  
abuse, 230

Treason to duty, meanness, craft—dishonor!  
What if I'd thrown my heart before the feet  
Of this sham husband! cast my love away  
Upon a counterfeit I was prepared  
To force affection upon any man  
Called Lanciotto Anything of silk,  
Tinsel, and gewgaws, if he bore that name,  
Might have received me for the asking. Yes,  
I was inclined to venture more than half  
In this base business—shame upon my  
thoughts!— 240

All for my father's peace and poor Ravenna's  
And this Paolo, with his cavalcade,  
His minstrels, music, and his pretty airs,  
His showy person, and his fulsome talk,  
Almost made me contented with my lot  
O! what a fool!—in faith, I merit it—  
Trapped by mere glitter! What an easy fool!  
Hal hal I'm glad it went no further, girl,

[*Laughing*]

I'm glad I kept my heart safe, after all  
There was my cunning. I have paid them  
back, 250

I warrant you! I'll marry Lanciotto,  
I'll seem to shuffle by this treachery. Nol  
I'll seek my father, put him face to face  
With his own falsehood, and I'll stand be-  
tween,

Awful as justice, meeting out to him  
Heaven's dreadful canons 'gainst his con-  
scious guilt

I'll marry Lanciotto. On my faith,  
I would not live another wicked day  
Here, in Ravenna, only for the fear 259  
That I should take to lying, with the rest.

Hal hal it makes me merry, when I think  
How safe I kept this little heart of mine!

[*Laughing*]

[*Exit, with Attendants, etc*]

RITTA. So 'tis all ended—all except my  
boiling,

And that will make a holiday for some.  
Perhaps I'm selfish Fagot, axe, and gallows,  
They have their uses, after all They give  
The lookers-on a deal of harmless sport.

Though one may suffer, twenty hundred  
laugh,

And that's a point gained. I have seen a  
man— 269

Poor Dora's uncle—shake himself with glee,  
At the bare thought of the ridiculous style  
In which some villain died "Dancing,"  
quoth he,

"To the poor music of a single string!  
Biting," quoth he, "after his head was off!  
What use of that?" Or, "Shivering," quoth  
he,

"As from an ague, with his beard afire!"  
And then he'd roar until his ugly mouth  
Split at the corners But to see me boil—

O! that will be the queerest thing of all!  
I wonder if they'll put me in a bag, 280

Like a great suet-ball! I'll go, and tell  
Count Guido, on the instant How he'll laugh  
To think his pot has got an occupant!

I wonder if he really takes delight  
In such amusements? Nay, I have kept faith

I only said the man was not Lanciotto,  
No word of Lanciotto's ugliness

I may escape the pot, for all Pardie!  
I wonder if they'll put me in a bag!

[*Exit, laughing*]

SCENE 3 *The Same A Room in  
Guido's Palace*

[*Enter GUIDO and RITTA*]

RITTA. There now, my lord, this is the  
whole of it

I love my mistress more than I fear you  
If I could save her finger from the axe,  
I'd give my head to do it. So, my lord,  
I am prepared to stew.

GUIDO. Boil, Ritta, boil.

RITTA. No, I prefer to stew.

GUIDO. And I to boil.

RITTA. 'Tis very hard, my lord, I cannot  
choose

My way of cooking. I shall laugh, I vow,  
In the grim headsman's face, when I remem-  
ber

That I am dying for my lady's love. 10  
I leave no one to shed a tear for me;

Father nor mother, kith nor kin, have I,  
To say, "Poor Rittal" o'er my lifeless clay.

They all have gone before me, and 'twere  
well

If I could hurry after them.

GUIDO. Poor child! [*Aside.*]

But, baggage, said you aught of Lanciotto?

RITTA. No, not a word, and he's so ugly,  
too!

GUIDO. Is he so ugly?

RITTA. Ugly! he is worse

Than Pilate on the hangings.

GUIDO. Hold your tongue

Here, and at Rimini, about the Count, 20  
And you shall prosper

RITTA. Am I not to boil?

GUIDO. No, child. But be discreet at Ri-  
mini

Old Malatesta is a dreadful man—  
Far worse than I—he bakes his people,

Ritta,

Lards them, like geese, and bakes them in an  
oven

RITTA. Fire is my fate, I see that.

GUIDO. Have a care

It do not follow you beyond this world.

Where is your mistress?

RITTA. In her room, my lord.

After I told her of the Count Paolo,  
She flew to have an interview with you; 30

But on the way—I know not why it was—  
She darted to her chamber, and there stays

Weeping in silence It would do you good—  
More than a hundred sermons—just to see

A single tear, indeed it would, my lord.

GUIDO. Hal you are saucy. I have humored  
you

Past prudence, malpert!<sup>1</sup> Get you to your  
room! [*Exit RITTA.*]

More of my blood runs in yon damsel's  
veins

Than the world knows. Her mother to a  
shade,

<sup>1</sup> usually "malapert," impudent

The same high spirit, and strange martyr-  
wish 40

To sacrifice herself, body and soul,  
For some loved end. All that she did for me,  
And yet I loved her not. O! memory!  
The darkest future has a ray of hope,  
But thou art blacker than the sepulcher!  
Thy horrid shapes be round, like scattered  
bones,

Hopeless forever! I am sick at heart.  
The past crowds on the present as I sowed,  
So am I reaping. Shadows from myself  
Fall on the picture, as I trace anew 50  
These rising specters of my early life,  
And add their gloom to what was dark be-  
fore  
O! memory, memory! How my temples  
throbl [Sits.]

[Enter FRANCESCA, hastily.]

FRANCESCA My lord, this outrage—[*He looks up*] Father, are you ill?  
You seem unhappy Have I troubled you?  
You heard how passionate and bad I was,  
When Rita told me of the Count Paolo.  
Dear father, calm yourself, and let me ask  
A child's forgiveness. 'Twas unadvised  
To doubt your wisdom It is over now, 60  
I only thought you might have trusted me  
With any counsel.

GUIDO [*aside*] Would I had!

FRANCESCA Ah! well,  
I understand it all, and you were right  
Only the danger of it. Think, my lord,  
If I had loved this man at the first sight  
We all have heard of such things Think,  
again,  
If I had loved him—as I then supposed  
You wished me to—'twould have been very  
sad.

But no, dear sir, I kept my heart secure,  
Nor will I loose it till you give the word 70  
I'm wiser than you thought me, you perceive  
But when we saw him, face to face, together,  
Surely you might have told me then.

GUIDO. Francesca,  
My eyes are old—I did not clearly see—  
Faith, it escaped my thoughts. Some other  
things

Came in my head. I was as ignorant  
Of Count Paolo's coming as yourself.

The brothers are so like.

FRANCESCA. Indeed?

GUIDO. Yes, yes,  
One is the other's counterpart, in fact; 79  
And even now it may not be—O! shame!  
I lie by habit [*Aside*.]

FRANCESCA. Then there is hope?  
He may be Lanciotto, after all?  
O! joy—

[Enter a SERVANT.]

SERVANT. The Count Paolo [Exit.]

FRANCESCA. Misery!  
That name was not Lanciotto!

GUIDO. Farewell, child.  
I'll leave you with the Count he'll make it  
plain.

It seems 'twas Count Paolo. [Going]

FRANCESCA. Father!  
GUIDO. Well

FRANCESCA. You knew it from the first  
[Exit GUIDO.] Let me begone

I could not look him in the face again  
With the old faith Besides, 'twould anger  
him

To have a living witness of his fraud 90  
Ever before him; and I could not trust—  
Strive as I might—my happiness to him,  
As once I did I could not lay my hand  
Upon his shoulder, and look up to him,  
Saying, Dear father, pilot me along  
Past this dread rock, through yonder narrow  
strait

Saints, no! The gold that gave my life away  
Might, even then, be rattling in his purse,  
Warm from the buyer's hand. Look on me,  
Heaven!

Him thou didst sanctify before my eyes, 100  
Him thou didst charge, as thy great deputy,  
With guardianship of a weak orphan girl,  
Has fallen from grace, has paltered with his  
trust,

I have no mother to receive thy charge,—  
O! take it on thyself, and when I err,  
Through mortal blindness, Heaven, be thou  
my guide!

Worse cannot fall me. Though my husband  
lack

A parent's tenderness, he yet may have  
Faith, truth, and honor—the immortal bonds  
That knit together honest hearts as one. 110

Let me away to Rimini. Alas!  
It wrings my heart to have outlived the day  
That I can leave my home with no regret!  
[Weeps.]

[Enter PAOLO]

PAOLO Pray, pardon me [Goes.]

FRANCESCA You are quite welcome,  
Count.

A foolish tear, a weakness, nothing more:  
But present weeping clears our future sight.  
They tell me you are love's commissioner,  
A kind of broker in the trade of hearts.  
Is it your usual business? or may I  
Flatter myself, by claiming this essay 120  
As your first effort?

PAOLO Lady, I believed  
My post, at starting, one of weight and trust;  
When I beheld you, I concluded it  
A charge of honor and high dignity.  
I did not think to hear you underrate  
Your own importance, by dishonoring me.

FRANCESCA You are severe, my lord.

PAOLO No, not severe,  
Say candid, rather I am somewhat hurt  
By my reception. If I feel the wound,  
'Tis not because I suffer from the jest, 130  
But that your lips should deal it

FRANCESCA Compliments  
Appear to be the staple of your speech.  
You ravish one with courtesy, you pour  
Fine words upon one, till the listening head  
Is bowed with sweetness Sir, your talk is  
drugged,

There's secret poppy in your sugared phrase.  
I'll taste before I take it

PAOLO Gentle lady—

FRANCESCA I am not gentle, or I missed  
my aim  
I am no hawk to fly at every lure 139  
You courtly gentlemen draw one broad rule—  
All girls are fools. It may be so, in truth,  
Yet so I'll not be treated

PAOLO Have you been?  
If I implied such slander by my words,  
They wrong my purpose. If I compliment,  
'Tis not from habit, but because I thought  
Your face deserved my homage as its due.  
When I have clearer insight, and you spread  
Your inner nature o'er your lineaments,  
Even that face may darken in the shades

Of my opinion. For mere loveliness 130  
Needs inward light to keep it always bright.  
All things look badly to unfriendly eyes.  
I spoke my first impression; cooler thought  
May work strange changes.

FRANCESCA Ah, Sir Count, at length  
There's matter in your words.

PAOLO Unpleasant stuff,  
To judge by your dark brows. I have essayed  
Kindness and coldness, yet you are not  
pleased

FRANCESCA How can I be?

PAOLO How, lady?

FRANCESCA Ay, sir, how?  
Your brother—my good lord that is to be—  
Sings me with his neglect, and in the place  
He should have filled, he sends a go-between,  
A common carrier of others' love, 16a  
How can the sender, or the person sent,  
Please overmuch? Now, were I such as you,  
I'd be too proud to travel round the land  
With other people's feelings in my heart;  
Even to fill the void which you confess  
By such employment.

PAOLO Lady, 'tis your wish  
To nettle me, to break my breeding down,  
And see what natural passions I have hidden  
Behind the outworks of my etiquette. 171  
I neither own nor feel the want of heart  
With which you charge me. You are more  
than cruel,

You rouse my nerves until they ache with life,  
And then pour fire upon them For myself  
I would not speak, unless you had compelled.  
My task is odious to me. Since I came,  
Heaven bear me witness how my traitor heart  
Has fought against my duty, and how oft  
I wished myself in Lanciotto's place, 180  
Or him in mine.

FRANCESCA You riddle.

PAOLO Do I? Well,  
Let it remain unguessed

FRANCESCA You wished yourself  
At Rimini, or Lanciotto here?  
You may have reasons.

PAOLO Well interpreted!  
The Sphinx were simple in your skilful hands!

FRANCESCA It has become your turn to  
sneer.

PAOLO But I  
Have gall to feed my bitterness, while you

Jest in the wanton ease of happiness.  
Stop! there is peril in our talk.

FRANCESCA. As how?

PAOLO. 'Tis dangerous to talk about one's  
self, 190

It panders selfishness. My duty waits.

FRANCESCA. My future lord's affairs? I  
quite forgot

COUNT LANCIOUO.

PAOLO. I, too, shame upon me! [*Aside.*]

FRANCESCA. Does he resemble you?

PAOLO. Pray, drop me, lady.

FRANCESCA. Nay, answer me

PAOLO. Somewhat—in feature

FRANCESCA. Hal

Is he so fair?

PAOLO. No, darker. He was tanned

In long campaigns, and battles hotly fought,  
While I lounged idly with the troubadours,  
Under the shadow of his watchful sword.

FRANCESCA. In person?

PAOLO. He is shorter, I believe,  
But broader, stronger, more compactly knit.

FRANCESCA. What of his mind?

PAOLO. Ah, now you strike the key!  
A mind just fitted to his history, 203

An equal balance 'twixt desert and fame  
No future chronicler shall say of him,  
His fame outran his merit, or his merit  
Halted behind some adverse circumstance,  
And never won the glory it deserved  
My love might weary you, if I rehearsed  
The simple beauty of his character, 210

His grandeur and his gentleness of heart,  
His warlike fire and peaceful love, his faith,  
His courtesy, his truth I'll not deny  
Some human weakness, to attract our love,  
Harbors in him, as in the rest of us  
Sometimes against our city's enemies  
He thunders in the distance, and devotes  
Their homes to ruin. When the brand has  
fallen,

He ever follows with a healing rain,  
And in his pity shoulders by revenge 220  
A thorough soldier, lady. He grasps crowns,  
While I pick at the laurel.

FRANCESCA. Stay, my lord!  
I asked your brother's value, with no wish  
To hear you underrate yourself. Your worth  
May rise in passing through another's lips.  
Lanciotto is perfection, then?

PAOLO.

To me:

Others may think my brother over-nice  
Upon the point of honor; over-keen  
To take offense where no offense is meant;  
A thought too prodigal of human life, 230  
Holding it naught when weighed against a  
wrong;

Suspicious of the motives of his friends;  
Distrustful of his own high excellence;  
And with a certain gloom of temperament,  
When thus disturbed, that makes him terrible  
And rash in action I have heard of this,  
I never felt it. I distress you, lady?  
Perhaps I throw these points too much in  
shade,

By catching at an enemy's report.

But, then, Lanciotto said, "You'll speak of  
me, 240

Not as I ought to be, but as I am "

He loathes deceit.

FRANCESCA. That's noble! Have you  
done?

I have observed a strange reserve, at times,  
An over-carefulness in choosing words,  
Both in my father and his nearest friends,  
When speaking of your brother, as if they  
Picked their way slowly over rocky ground,  
Fearing to stumble. Ritta, too, my maid,  
When her tongue rattles on in full career,  
Stops at your brother's name, and with a sigh  
Settles herself to dismal silence Count, 251  
These things have troubled me From you I  
look

For perfect frankness Is there naught withheld?

PAOLO [*aside*] O, base temptation! What if  
I betray

His crippled person—imitate his limp—  
Laugh at his hip, his back, his sullen moods  
Of childish superstition?—tread his heart  
Under my feet, to climb into his place?—  
Use his own warrant 'gainst himself, and say,  
Because I loved her, and misjudged your jest,  
Therefore I stole her? Why, a common thief  
Would hang for just such thinking! Hal hal hal

[*Laughing.*]

I reckon on her love, as if I held 263  
The counsels of her bosom. No, I swear  
Francesca would despise so mean a deed  
Have I no honor either? Are my thoughts  
All bound by her opinion?

FRANCESCA. This is strange!  
Is Lanciotto's name a spell to all? 268  
I ask a simple question, and straight you  
Start to one side, and mutter to yourself,  
And laugh, and groan, and play the lunatic,  
In such a style that you astound me more  
Than all the others. It appears to me  
I have been singled as a common dupe  
By every one. What mystery is this  
Surrounds Count Lanciotto? If there be  
A single creature in the universe  
Who has a right to know him as he is,  
I am that one

PAOLO I grant it You shall see,  
And shape your judgment by your own re-  
mark. 280

All that my honor calls for I have said  
FRANCESCA I am content Unless I greatly  
err,  
Heaven made your breast the seat of honest  
thoughts

You know, my lord, that, once at Rimini,  
There can be no retreat for me By you,  
Here at Ravenna, in your brother's name,  
I shall be solemnly betrothed And now  
I thus extend my maiden hand to you,  
If you are conscious of no secret guilt, 289  
Take it

PAOLO I do [Takes her hand]

FRANCESCA You tremble!

PAOLO With the hand,  
Not with the obligation

FRANCESCA Farewell, Count!  
'Twere cruel to tax your stock of compli-  
ments,

That waste their sweets upon a trammelled  
heart,

Go fly your fancies at some freer game  
[Exit]

PAOLO O, heaven, if I have faltered and  
am weak,

'Tis from my nature! Fancies, more accursed  
Than haunt a murderer's bedside, throng my  
brain—

Temptations, such as mortal never bore  
Since Satan whispered in the ear of Eve, 299  
Sing in my ear—and all, all are accursed!  
At heart I have betrayed my brother's trust,  
Francesca's openly. Turn where I will,  
As if enclosed within a mirrored hall,  
I see a traitor. Now to stand erect,

Firm on my base of manly constancy;  
Or, if I stagger, let me never quit  
The homely path of duty, for the ways  
That bloom and glitter with seductive sin! [Exit.]

### ACT III

SCENE 1 Rimini A room in the Castle.

LANCIOTTO discovered reading.

LANCIOTTO O! fie, philosophy! This  
Seneca

Revels in wealth, and whines about the poor!  
Talks of starvation while his banquet waits,  
And fancies that a two hours' appetite  
Throws light on famine! Doubtless he can  
tell,

As he skips nimbly through his dancing-  
girls,

How sad it is to lump about the world  
A sightless cripple! Let him feel the crutch  
Wearing against his heart, and then I'd hear  
This sage talk glibly, or provide a pad, 10  
Stuffed with his soft philosophy, to ease  
His aching shoulder Pshaw! he never felt,  
Or pain would choke his frothy utterance.

'Tis easy for the doctor to compound  
His nauseous simples for a sick man's health,  
But let him swallow them, for his disease,  
Without wry faces. Ah! the tug is there.  
Show me philosophy in rags, in want,  
Sick of a fever, with a back like mine,  
Creeping to wisdom on these legs, and I 20  
Will drink its comforts Out! away with  
you!

There's no such thing as real philosophy!  
[Throws down the book.]

[Enter PEPE]

Here is a sage who'll teach a courtier  
The laws of etiquette, a statesman rule,  
A soldier discipline, a poet verse,  
And each mechanic his distinctive trade;  
Yet bring him to his motley, and how wide  
He shoots from reason! We can understand  
All business but our own, and thrust advice  
In every gaping cranny of the world; 30  
While habit shapes us to our own dull work,  
And reason nods above his proper task.  
Just so philosophy would rectify  
All things abroad, and be a jade at home.

Pepe, what think you of the Emperor's aim  
Towards Hungary?

PEPE. A most unwise design,  
For mark, my lord—

LANCIOTTO. Why, therel the fact  
cries out.

Here's motley thinking for a diadem!—  
Ay, and more wisely in his own regard.

PEPE. You flout me, cousin.

LANCIOTTO. Have you aught that's  
new?— 40

Some witty trifle, some absurd conceit?

PEPE. Troth, no

LANCIOTTO. Why not give up the Em-  
peror,

And bend your wisdom on your duties, Pepe?

PEPE. Because the Emperor has more need  
of wisdom

Than the most barren fool of wit

LANCIOTTO. Well said!  
Mere habit brings the fool back to his art.

This jester is a rare philosopher.

Teach me philosophy, good fool

PEPE. No need

You'll get a teacher when you take a wife

If she do not instruct you in more arts 50

Than Aristotle ever thought upon,

The good old race of woman has declined

Into a sort of male stupidity

I had a sweetheart once, she lectured grandly,

No matter on what subject she might hut,

'Twas all the same, she could talk and she  
would.

She had no silly modesty, she dashed

Straight in the teeth of any argument,

And talked you deaf, dumb, blind. Whatever  
struck

Upon her ear, by some machinery, 60

Set her tongue wagging. Thank the Lord,  
she died!—

Dropped in the middle of a fierce harangue,

Like a spent horse. It was an even thing,

Whether she talked herself or me to death

The latest sign of life was in her tongue,

It wagged till sundown, like a serpent's tail,

Long after all the rest of her was cold

Alas! poor Zippal

LANCIOTTO. Were you married, fool?

PEPE. Married! Have I the scars upon me?

No,

I fell in love; and that was bad enough. 70

And far enough for a mere fool to go.  
Married! why, marriage is love's purgatory,  
Without a heaven beyond.

LANCIOTTO. Fie, atheist!  
Would you abolish marriage?

PEPE. Yes.

LANCIOTTO. What?

PEPE. Yes.

LANCIOTTO. Depopulate the world?

PEPE. No fear of that.

I'd have no families, no Malatesti,  
Strutting about the land, with pedigrees  
And claims bequeathed them by their an-  
cestors;

No fellows vamping of their royal blood;  
No one to seize a whole inheritance, 80

And rob the other children of the earth.

By Jove! you should not know your fathers,  
even!

I'd have you spring, like toadstools, from the  
soil—

Mere sons of women—nothing more nor  
less—

All base-born, and all equal There, my lord,  
There is a simple commonwealth for you!

In which aspiring merit takes the lead,

And birth goes begging.

LANCIOTTO. It is so, in truth,  
And by the simplest means I ever heard

PEPE. Think of it, cousin. Tell it to your  
friends, 90

The statesmen, soldiers, and philosophers,

Noise it about the earth, and let it stir

The sluggish spirits of the multitudes.

Pursue the thought, scan it, from end to end,

Through all its latent possibilities

It is a great seed dropped, I promise you,

And it must sprout. Thought never wholly  
dies,

It only wants a name—a hard Greek name—

Some few apostles, who may live on it—

A crowd of listeners, with the average dul-  
ness 100

That man possesses—and we organize,

Spread our new doctrine, like a general  
plague,

Talk of man's progress and development,

Wrongs of society, the march of mind,

The Devil, Doctor Faustus, and what not;

And, lol this pretty world turns upside down,  
All with a fool's ideal

LANCIOTTO. By Jupiter,  
You hit our modern teachers to a hair!  
I knew this fool was a philosopher.  
Pepe is right. Mechanic means advance, 110  
Nature bows down to science' haughty tread,  
And turns the wheel of smutty artifice,  
New governments arise, dilute, decay,  
And foster creeds and churches to their tastes.  
At each advance, we cry, "Behold, the end!"  
Till some fresh wonder breaks upon the age  
But man, the moral creature, midst it all  
Stands still unchanged, nor moves towards  
virtue more,  
Nor comprehends the mysteries in himself,  
More than when Plato taught academies, 120  
Or Zeno thundered from his Attic porch.

PEPE. I know not that, I only want my  
scheme  
Tried for a while I am a politician,  
A wrongs-of-man man Hang philosophy!  
Let metaphysics swallow, at a gulp,  
Its last two syllables, and purge itself  
Clean of its filthy humors! I am one  
Ready for martyrdom, for stake and fire,  
If I can make my great idea take root!  
Zounds! cousin, if I had an audience, 130  
I'd make you shudder at my eloquence!  
I have an itching to reform the world  
LANCIOTTO. Begin at home, then.

PEPE Home is not my sphere,  
Heaven picked me out to teach my fellow-  
men.

I am a very firebrand of truth—  
A self-consuming, doomed, devoted brand—  
That burns to ashes while I light the world!  
I feel it in me. I am moved, inspired,  
Stirred into utterance, by some mystic power  
Of which I am the humble instrument 140  
LANCIOTTO. A bad digestion, sage, a bilious  
turn,

A gnawing stomach, or a pinching shoe.  
PEPE Ol hear, but spare the scoffer! Spare  
the wretch

Who sneers at the anointed man of truth!  
When we reached that, I and my followers  
Would rend you limb from limb Therel—  
hal hal hal [Laughing]  
Have I not caught the slang these fellows  
preach,

A grand, original idea, to back it;  
And all the stock in trade of a reformer?

LANCIOTTO. You have indeed; nor do I  
wonder, Pepe. 150

Fool as you are, I promise you success  
In your new calling, if you'll set it up.  
The thing is far too simple.

[Trumpet sounds within.]

PEPE Hist! my lord.  
LANCIOTTO. That calls me to myself.  
PEPE At that alarm,  
All Rimini leaped up upon its feet.  
Cousin, your bridal-train. You groan! 'Ods  
wounds!

Here is the bridegroom sorely malcontent—  
The sole sad face in Rimini Since morn,  
A quiet man could hardly walk the streets,  
For flowers and streamers. All the town is  
gay 160

Perhaps 'tis merry o'er your misery.

LANCIOTTO Perhaps, but that it knows  
not

PEPE Yes, it does  
It knows that when a man's about to wed,  
He's ripe to laugh at Cousin, tell me, now,  
Why is Paolo on the way so long?  
Ravenna's but eight leagues from Rimini—

LANCIOTTO. That's just the measure of  
your tongue, good fool  
You trouble me I've had enough of you—  
Begone!

PEPE I'm going, but you see I limp.  
Have pity on a cripple, gentle Count. 170  
[Limps]

LANCIOTTO. Pepe!  
PEPE A miracle, a miracle!  
See, see, my lord, at Pepe's saintly name  
The lame jog on.

MALATESTA [without] Come, Lanciotto!  
LANCIOTTO Hark!

My father calls.  
PEPE If he were mine, I'd go—  
That's a good boy!

[Pats LANCIOTTO's back]

LANCIOTTO [starting]. Hands off! you'll rue  
it else! [Exit.]

PEPE [laughing] Hal ha! I laid my hand  
upon his hump!  
Heavens, how he squirmed! And what a wish  
I had

To cry, Hol camell leap upon his back,  
And ride him to the devil! So, we've had  
A pleasant fitting round philosophy! 180



The Count and Fool bumped heads, and  
struck ideas

Out by the contact! Quite a pleasant talk—  
A friendly conversation, nothing more—  
'Twixt nobleman and jester Ho! my bird,  
I can toss lures as high as any man.  
So, I amuse you with my harmless wit?  
Pepe's your friend now—you can trust in  
him—

An honest, simple fool! Just try it once,  
You ugly, misbegotten clod of dirt!  
Ay, but the hump—the touch upon the  
hump— 190  
The start and wriggle—that was rare! Hal  
hal [Exit, laughing]

SCENE 2. *The Same. The Grand Square before  
the Castle. Soldiers on guard, with banners,  
etc. Citizens, in holiday dresses, cross the  
scene. The houses are hung with trophies,  
banners, garlands, etc.*

[Enter MALATESTA, with Guards, Attendants]

MALATESTA. Captain, take care the streets  
be not choked up  
By the rude rabble Send to Caesar's bridge  
A strong detachment of your men, and clear  
The way before them See that nothing check  
The bride's first entrance into Rimini  
Station your veterans in the front. Count  
Guido  
Comes with his daughter, and his eyes are  
sharp.  
Keep up a show of strength before him, sir,  
And set some laborers to work upon  
The broken bastion Make all things look  
bright, 10  
As if we stood in eager readiness,  
And high condition, to begin a war  
CAPTAIN. I will, my lord  
MALATESTA. Keep Guido in your eye;  
And if you see him looking over-long  
On any weakness of our walls, just file  
Your bulkiest fellows round him, or get up  
A scuffle with the people, anything—  
Even if you break a head or two—to draw  
His vision off. But where our strength is  
great, 19  
Take heed to make him see it. You conceive?  
CAPTAIN. Trust me, my lord

[Exit with Guards.]

[Enter PEPE.]

PEPE. Room, room! A hall, a hall!  
I pray you, good man, has the funeral passed?  
MALATESTA. Who is it asks?

PEPE. Pepe of Padua,  
A learned doctor of uncivil law.

MALATESTA. But how a funeral?  
PEPE. You are weak of wit  
Francesca of Ravenna's borne to church,  
And never issues thence

MALATESTA. How, doctor, pray?  
PEPE. Now, for a citizen of Rimini,  
You're sadly dull Does she not issue thence  
Fanny of Rimini? A glorious change,— 30  
A kind of resurrection in the flesh!

MALATESTA [laughing]. Hal hal thou cunning villain! I was caught

I own it, doctor

PEPE [aside]. This old fool would laugh  
To see me break a straw, because the bits  
Were of unequal lengths My character  
Carries more dulness, in the guise of wit,  
Than would suffice to break an ass's back  
[Distant shouts, music, etc.]

Hark! here comes Jephtha's daughter, jogging  
on  
With timbrels and with dances

MALATESTA. Jephtha's daughter!  
How so?

PEPE. Her father's sacrifice  
MALATESTA [laughing]. Hol hol  
You'll burst my belt! O! you outrageous  
wretch, 41

To jest at Scripture!  
PEPE. You outlandish heathen,  
'Tis not in Scripture!

MALATESTA. Is it not?  
PEPE. No more  
Than you are in heaven. Mere Hebrew history  
She went up to the mountains, to bewail  
The too-long keeping of her honesty.  
There's woman for you! there's a character!  
What man would ever think of such a thing?  
Ah! we of Rimini have little cause  
For such a sorrow. Would she'd been my  
wife! 50

I'll marry any woman in her case.

MALATESTA. Why, Pepe?

PEPE. Why? because, in two  
months' time,

Along comes father Jephtha with his knife,  
And there's an end. Where is your sacrifice?  
Where's Isaac, Abraham? Build your altar  
up:

One pile will do for both.

MALATESTA. That's Scripture, sure.

PEPE. Then I'm a ram, and you may  
slaughter me  
In Isaac's stead.

MALATESTA. Here comes the vanguard.

Where,  
Where is that laggard?

PEPE. At the mirror, uncle,  
Making himself look beautiful. He comes,

[*Looking out.*]

Fresh as a bridegroom! Mark his doublet's  
fit 61

Across the shoulders, and his hose!—

By Jove, he nearly looks like any other man!

MALATESTA. You'd best not let him hear  
you Sirrah, knave,

I have a mind to swinge you!

[*Seizes his ear.*]

PEPE. Loose my ear!  
You've got the wrong sow, swineherd!  
You're unjust

Being his father, I was fool sufficient  
To think you fashioned him to suit yourself,  
By way of a variety. The thought  
Was good enough, the practice damnable

MALATESTA. Hush! or I'll clap you in the  
pillory 71

[*Enter LANCIOTTO*]

PEPE [*sings*]

Ho, ho, ho, ho!—old Time has wings—  
We're born, we mourn, we wed, we bed,  
We have a devilish aching head,  
So down we lie,  
And die, and fry,  
And there's a merry end of things!

[*Music, etc. within.*]

Here come Ravenna's eagles for a roost  
In Rimini! The air is black with them.  
When go they hence? Wherever yon bird  
builds, 80

The nest remains for ages. Have an eye,  
Or Malatesta's elephant may feel  
The eagle's talons.

LANCIOTTO. You're a raven, croaker.

PEPE. And you no white crow, to insure us  
luck.

MALATESTA. There's matter in his croak.

PEPE. There always is,

But men lack ears.

MALATESTA. Then eyes must do our  
work.

Old Guido shall be looked to. If his force 87  
Appear too great, I'll camp him out of town  
LANCIOTTO. Father, you are a sorry host.

MALATESTA. Well, well,  
I'm a good landlord, though I do not like  
Thus fight of eagles more than Pepe. 'Sdeath!  
Guido was ever treacherous.

LANCIOTTO. My lord,  
You mar my holiday by such a thought.  
My holiday! Dear saints! it seems to me  
That all of you are mocking me

PEPE. So—so—  
Guido was ever treacherous?—so—sol

MALATESTA. So—sol! How so?

PEPE. What if this treachery  
Run in the blood? We'll tap a vein then—sol

MALATESTA. Sew up your mouth, and mind  
your fooling, fool! 99

PEPE. Am I not fooling? Why, my lord, I  
thought

The fooling exquisite

LANCIOTTO [*aside*]. This thoughtless knave  
Hits near us sometimes with his random shafts.  
Marriage for me! I cannot comprehend,  
I cannot take it to my heart, the thing  
Seems gross, absurd, ridiculous. Ah! well,  
My father bears the folly of it all;  
I'm but an actor in his comedy.

My part is bad, and I must through with it.  
[*Retires.*]

[*Shouts, music, etc., within.*]

PEPE. Look! here's the whole parade! Mark  
yonder knave—

The head one with the standard. Nature,  
nature! 110

Hadst thou a hand in such a botch-work?  
Why,

A forest of his legs would scarcely make  
A bunch of fagots. Mark old Guido, too!  
He looks like Judas with his silver. Hol  
Here's news from sweet Ravenna!

MALATESTA [*laughing*]. Hal hal hal

PEPE. Ah! now the bride!—that's some-  
thing—she is toothsome.

Look you, my lord—now, while the progress  
halts—

Cousin Paolo, has he got the dumps?  
Mercy! to see him, one might almost think  
'Twas his own marriage. What a doleful face!  
The boy is ill He caught a fever, uncle, 121  
Travelling across the marshes Physic! physic!  
If he be really dying, get a doctor,  
And cut the matter short. 'Twere merciful.

MALATESTA. For heaven's sake, cease your  
clamor! I shall have  
No face to meet them else 'Tis strange, for all:  
What ails Paolo?

PEPE. Dying, by this hand!

MALATESTA. Then I will hang you.

PEPE. Don't take up my craft.  
Wit's such a stranger in your brain that I  
Scarce knew my lodger venturing from your  
mouth. 130

Now they come on again

MALATESTA. Stand back!

PEPE [looking round] The bridegroom?  
He flies betimes, before the bride shows fight  
[Walks back, looking for LANCIOTTO]

[Music, shouts, ringing of bells, etc. Enter Men-  
at-arms, with banners, etc., GUIDO, Cardi-  
nal, Knights, Attendants, etc., then PAOLO,  
conducting FRANCESCA, followed by RITTA,  
Ladies, Pages, etc., and other Men-at-arms  
They file around the stage, and halt.]

MALATESTA. Welcome to Rimini, Count  
Guido! Welcome,  
And fair impressions of our poor abode,  
To you, my daughter! You are well returned.  
My son, Paolo! Let me bless you, son.

[PAOLO approaches]  
How many spears are in old Guido's train?  
[Apart to PAOLO.]

PAOLO. Some ten-score

MALATESTA. Footmen?

PAOLO. Double that

MALATESTA. 'Tis well

Again I bid you welcome! Make no show  
Of useless ceremony with us. Friends 140  
Have closer titles than the empty name  
We have provided entertainment, Count,  
For all your followers, in the midst of us.  
We trust the veterans of Rimini  
May prove your soldiers that our courtesy  
Does not lag far behind their warlike zeal.

Let us drop Gueff and Ghibelin henceforth,  
Coupling the names of Rimini and Ravenna  
As bridegroom's to his bride's.

GUIDO. Count Malatesta,  
I am no rhetorician, or my words 150  
Might keep more even with the love I feel.  
Simply, I thank you. With an honest hand  
I take the hand which you extend to me,  
And hope our grasp may never lose its  
warmth.—

You marked the bastion by the waterside?  
Weak as a bulrush. [Apart to a KNIGHT.]  
KNIGHT. Tottering weak, my lord

GUIDO. Remember it, and when you're  
private, sir,  
Draw me a plan

KNIGHT. I will, my lord.

GUIDO. How's this?  
I do not see my future son-in-law.

MALATESTA. Lanciotto!

LANCIOTTO [advancing] I am here, my lord

FRANCESCA [starting] O! heaven! 160

Is that my husband, Count Paolo? You,  
You then, among the rest, have played me  
false!

He is— [Apart to PAOLO]

PAOLO. My brother.

LANCIOTTO [aside] Ha! she turns from me.

PEPE [approaching LANCIOTTO, sings]

Around, around the lady turned,  
She turned not to her lord,  
She turned around to a gallant, gallant knight,  
Who ate at his father's board

A pretty ballad! all on one string though  
LANCIOTTO. Pepe, go hence! [PEPE retires.]

[Aside.] I saw her start and pale, 169  
Turn off with horror, as if she had seen—  
What?—simply me For, am I not enough,  
And something over, to make ladies quail,  
Start, hide their faces, whisper to their friends,  
Point at me—dare she?—and perform such  
tricks

As women will when monsters blast their  
sight?

O! saints above me, have I come so low?  
Yon damsel of Ravenna shall bewail  
That start and shudder. I am mad, mad, mad!  
I must be patient. They have trifled with her—  
Lied to her, lied! There's half the misery 180  
Of this broad earth, all crowded in one word.

Lied, lied!—Who has not suffered from a lie?  
They're all aghast—all looking at me, too.  
Francesca's whiter than the brow of fear:  
Paolo talks.—Brother, is that well meant?  
What if I draw my sword, and fight my way  
Out of this cursed town? 'T would be relief.  
Has shame no hiding-place? I've touched the  
depth

Of human infamy, and there I rest  
By heaven, I'll brave this business out! Shall  
they 190

Say at Ravenna that Count Lanciotto,  
Who's driven their shivering squadrons to  
their homes,  
Haggard with terror, turned before their eyes  
And slunk away? They'll look me from the  
field,

When we encounter next. Why should not I  
Strut with my shapeless body, as old Guido  
Struts with his shapeless heart? I'll do it!  
[Offers, but shrinks back] 'Sdeath!

Am I so false as to forswear myself?  
Lady Francesca! [Approaches FRANCESCA.]

FRANCESCA. Sir—my lord—  
LANCIOTTO. Dear lady,

I have a share in your embarrassment, 200  
And know the feelings that possess you now.

FRANCESCA. O! you do not  
PAOLO [advancing] My lady—

LANCIOTTO. Gentle brother,  
Leave this to me [PAOLO retires]

FRANCESCA. Pray do not send him off  
LANCIOTTO. 'Tis fitter so.

FRANCESCA. He comforts me  
LANCIOTTO. Indeed?

Do you need comfort?  
FRANCESCA. No, no—pardon me!

But then—he is—you are—  
LANCIOTTO. Take breath, and speak.

FRANCESCA. I am confused, 'tis true But,  
then, my lord,

You are a stranger to me; and Paolo  
I've known so long!

LANCIOTTO. Since yesterday.  
FRANCESCA. Ah! well:

But the relationship between us two 210  
Is of so close a nature, while the knowledge,  
That each may have of each, so slender is  
That the two jar. Besides, Paolo is  
Nothing to me, while you are everything  
Can I not act? [Aside.]

LANCIOTTO. I scarcely understand.  
You say your knowledge of me, till today,  
Was incomplete. Has naught been said of me  
By Count Paolo or your father?

FRANCESCA. Yes;  
But nothing definite.

LANCIOTTO. Perchance, no hint  
As to my ways, my feelings, manners, or—  
Or—or—as I was saying—hal hal—or—  
[Laughing.]

As to my person?  
FRANCESCA. Nothing, as to that. 222

LANCIOTTO. To what?  
FRANCESCA. Your—person.

LANCIOTTO. That's the least of all.  
[Turns aside.]

Now, had I Guido of Ravenna's head  
Under this heel, I'd grind it into dust!  
False villain, to betray his simple child!  
And thou, Paolo—not a whit behind—  
Helping his craft with inconsiderate love!—  
Lady Francesca, when my brother left,  
I charged him, as he loved me, to conceal  
Nothing from you that bore on me, and now  
That you have seen me, and conversed with  
me, 232

If you object to anything in me,—  
Go, I release you.

FRANCESCA. But Ravenna's peace?  
LANCIOTTO. Shall not be perilled.

GUIDO [coming behind, whispers her]. Trust  
him not, my child,

I know his ways, he'd rather fight than wed  
'Tis but a wish to have the war afoot.  
Stand firm for poor Ravenna!

LANCIOTTO. Well, my lady,  
Shall we conclude a lasting peace between us  
By truce or marriage rites?

GUIDO [whispers her] The devil tempts  
thee. 240

Think of Ravenna, think of me!  
LANCIOTTO. My lord,

I see my father waits you [GUIDO retires]  
FRANCESCA. Gentle sir,

You do me little honor in the choice.  
LANCIOTTO. My aim is justice.

FRANCESCA. Would you cast me  
off?

LANCIOTTO. Not for the world, if honestly  
obtained;  
Not for the world would I obtain you falsely.

FRANCESCA. The rites were half concluded ere we met.

LANCIOTTO. Meeting, would you withdraw?

FRANCESCA. No. Bitter word! *[Aside.]*

LANCIOTTO. Nol Are you dealing fairly?

FRANCESCA. I have said.

LANCIOTTO. O! rapture, rapture! Can it be that I— 250

Now I'll speak plainly; for a choice like thine Implies such love as woman never felt.

Love me! Then monsters beget miracles, And Heaven provides where human means fall short.

Lady, I'll worship thee! I'll line thy path With suppliant kings! Thy waiting-maids shall be

Unransomed princesses! Mankind shall bow One neck to thee, as Persia's multitudes

Before the rising sun! From this small town, This center of my conquests, I will spread

An empire touching the extremes of earth! I'll raise once more the name of ancient Rome;

And what she swayed she shall reclaim again! If I grow mad because you smile on me, 264

Think of the glory of thy love; and know How hard it is, for such an one as I,

To gaze unshaken on divinity! There's no such love as mine alive in man.

From every corner of the frowning earth, It has been crowded back into my heart.

Now, take it all! If that be not enough, Ask, and thy wish shall be omnipotent!

Your hand. *[Takes her hand.]* It wavers. FRANCESCA. So does not my heart.

LANCIOTTO. Bravo! Thou art every way a soldier's wife, 274

Thou shouldst have been a Cæsar's! Father, hark!

I blamed your judgment, only to perceive The weakness of my own.

MALATESTA. What means all this?

LANCIOTTO. It means that this fair lady— though I gave

Release to her, and to Ravenna—placed The liberal hand, which I restored to her,

Back in my own, of her own free good-will. Is it not wonderful?

MALATESTA. How so?

LANCIOTTO. How so! 282

PAOLO. Alas! 'tis as I feared! *[Aside.]*

MALATESTA. You're humble?—How?

LANCIOTTO. Now shall I cry aloud to all the world,

Make my deformity my pride, and say, Because she loves me, I may boast of it? *[Aside.]*

No matter, father, I am happy; you, As the blessed cause, shall share my happiness.

Let us be moving. Revels, dashed with wine, Shall multiply the joys of this sweet day!

There's not a blessing in the cup of life 291 I have not tasted of within an hour!

FRANCESCA *[aside]*. Thus I begin the practice of deceit.

Taught by deceivers, at a fearful cost. The bankrupt gambler has become the cheat,

And lives by arts that erewhile ruined me. Where it will end, heaven knows; but I—

I have betrayed the noblest heart of all! LANCIOTTO. Draw down thy dusky va-

pors, sullen night— 299

Refuse, ye stars, to shine upon the world— Let everlasting blackness wrap the sun,

And whisper terror to the universe! We need ye not! we'll blind ye, if ye dare

Peer with lackluster on our revelry! I have at heart a passion, that would make

All nature blaze with recreated light! *[Exeunt.]*

## ACT IV

### SCENE I *The Same An apartment in the Castle*

*[Enter LANCIOTTO.]*

LANCIOTTO. It cannot be that I have duped myself,

That my desire has played into the hand Of my belief, yet such a thing might be.

We palm more frauds upon our simple selves Than knavery puts upon us. Could I trust

The open candor of an angel's brow, I must believe Francesca's! But the tongue

Should consummate the proof upon the brow, And give the truth its word! The fault lies there.

I've tried her. Press her as I may to it, 30 She will not utter those three little words—

"I love thee." She will say, "I'll marry you;—

I'll be your duteous wife;—I'll cheer your days;—

I'll do whate'er I can." But at the point  
Of present love, she ever shifts the ground,  
Winds round the word, laughs, calls me  
"Infidel!—

How can I doubt?" So, on and on. But yet,  
For all her dainty ways, she never says,  
Frankly, I love thee I am jealous—true!  
Suspicious—true! distrustful of myself,—  
She knows all that. Ay, and she likewise  
knows, 21

A single waking of her morning breath  
Would blow these vapors off I would not take  
The barren offer of a heartless hand,  
If all the Indies covered under it.  
Perhaps she loves another? No, she said,  
"I love you, Count, as well as any man",  
And laughed, as if she thought that precious  
wit

I turn her nonsense into argument,  
And think I reason. Shall I give her up? 30  
Rat! at her heedlessness, and bid her go  
Back to Ravenna? But she clings to me,  
At the least hint of parting Ah! 'tis sweet,  
Sweeter than slumber to the lids of pain,  
To fancy that a shadow of true love  
May fall on this God-stricken mould of woe,  
From so serene a nature Beautiful  
Is the first vision of a desert brook,  
Shining beneath its palmy garniture,  
To one who travels on his easy way, 40  
What is it to the bloodshot, aching eye  
Of some poor wight who crawls with gory  
feet,

In famished madness, to its very brink,  
And throws his sun-scorched limbs upon the  
cool

And humid margin of its shady strand,  
To suck up life at every eager gasp?  
Such seems Francesca to my thirsting soul,  
Shall I turn off and die?

[Enter PEPE]

PEPE Good-morning, cousin!

LANCIOTTO. Good-morning to your fool-  
ish majesty! 49

PEPE. The same to your majestic foolery!

LANCIOTTO. You compliment!

PEPE. I am a troubadour,  
A ballad-monger of fine mongrel ballads,

And therefore running o'er with elegance  
Wilt hear my verse?

LANCIOTTO. With patience?

PEPE. No, with rapture.

You must go mad—weep, rend your clothes,  
and roll

Over and over, like the ancient Greeks,  
When listening to the Iliad.

LANCIOTTO Sing, then, sing!  
And if you equal Homer in your song, 58  
Why, roll I must, by sheer compulsion.

PEPE Nay,  
You lack the temper of the fine-eared Greek.  
You will not roll; but that shall not disgrace  
My gallant ballad, fallen on evil times [Sings.]

My father had a blue-black head,  
My uncle's head was reddish—maybe,  
My mother's hair was noways red,  
Sing hugh hol the pretty baby!

Mark the simplicity of that! 'Tis called  
"The Babe's Confession," spoken just before  
His father strangled him.

LANCIOTTO Most marvellous!  
You struggle with a legend worth your art.  
PEPE Now to the second stanza Note the  
hint 71

I drop about the baby's parentage  
So delicately too! A maid might sing,  
And never blush at it Girls love these songs  
Of sugared wickedness. They'll go miles  
about,

To say a foul thing in a cleanly way.  
A decent immorality, my lord,  
Is art's specific. Get the passions up,  
But never wring the stomach.

LANCIOTTO. Triumphant art!  
PEPE [sings].

My father combed his blue-black head, 80  
My uncle combed his red head—maybe,  
My mother combed my head, and said,  
Sing hugh ho! my red-haired baby!

LANCIOTTO. Fie, fie! go comb your hair in  
private.

PEPE What  
Will you not hear? Now comes the tragedy.  
[Sings.]

My father tore my red, red head,  
My uncle tore my father's—maybe,  
My mother tore both till they bled—  
Sing hugh hol your brother's baby!

LANCIOTTO. Why, what a hair-rending!

PEPE. Thence wigs arose,

A striking epoch in man's history. 91

But did you notice the concluding line,  
Sung by the vicum's mother? There's a hui!

"Sing high hol your brother's baby!"

Which brother's, pray you? That's the  
mystery,

The adumbration of poetic art,

And there I leave it to perplex mankind

It has a moral, fathers should regard,—

A black-haired dog breeds not a red-haired  
cur.

Treasure this knowledge: you're about to  
wive, 100

And no one knows what accident—

LANCIOTTO. Peace, fool!

So all this cunning thing was wound about,  
To cast a gibe at my deformity?

[Tears off PEPE's cap.]

There lies your cap, the emblem that protects  
Your head from chastisement Now, Pepe,  
hark!

Of late you've taken to reviling me; 106

Under your motley, you have dared to jest

At God's inflictions. Let me tell you, fool,

No man e'er lived, to make a second jest

At me, before your time!

PEPE. Boo! Bloody-bones!

If you're a coward—which I hardly think—

You'll have me flogged, or put into a cell,

Or fed to wolves. If you are bold of heart,

You'll let me run. Do not; I'll work you  
harm!

I, Beppo Pepe, standing as a man,

Without my motley, tell you, in plain terms,

I'll work you harm—I'll do you mischief,  
man!

LANCIOTTO. I, Lanciotto, Count of Ri-  
mini,

Will hang you, then. Put on your jingling  
cap; 119

You please my father. But remember, fool,

No jests at me!

PEPE. I will try earnest next.

LANCIOTTO. And I the gallows.

PEPE. Well, cry

quits, cry quits!

I'll stretch your heart, and you my neck—  
quits, quits!

LANCIOTTO. Go, fool! Your weakness  
bounds your malice

PEPE. Yes:

So you all think, you savage gentlemen,  
Until you feel my stung. Hang, hang away!  
It is an airy, wholesome sort of death,  
Much to my liking. When I hang, my friend,  
You'll be chief mourner, I can promise you.  
Hang me! I've quite a notion to be hung 130  
I'll do my utmost to deserve it. Hang! [Exit]

LANCIOTTO. I am bemocked on all sides.

My sad state

Has given the licensed and unlicensed fool  
Charter to challenge me at every turn.

The jester's laughing bauble blunts my sword,  
His gibes cut deeper than its fearful edge;

And I, a man, a soldier, and a prince,

Before this motley patchwork of a man,

Stand all appalled, as if he were a glass

Wherein I saw my own deformity 140

O Heaven! a tear—one little tear—to wash

This aching dryness of the heart away!

[Enter PAOLO]

PAOLO. What ails the fool? He passed me,  
muttering

The strangest garbage in the fiercest tone

"Ha! ha!" cried he, "they made a fool of me—

A motley man, a slave, as if I felt

No stir in me of manly dignity!

Ha! ha! a fool—a painted plaything, toy—

For men to kick about this dirty world!—

My world as well as theirs.—God's world, I  
trow! 150

I will get even with them yet—ha! ha!

In the democracy of death we'll square

I'll crawl and lie beside a king's own son,

Kiss a young princess, dead lip to dead lip,

Pull the Pope's nose, and kick down Charle-  
magne,

Throne, crown, and all, where the old idiot  
sprawls,

Safe as he thinks, rotting in royal state!"

And then he laughed and gibbered, as if  
drunk

With some infernal ecstasy

LANCIOTTO. Poor fool!

That is the groundwork of his malice, then,—  
His conscious difference from the rest of  
men? 161

I, of all men, should pity him the most.

Poor Pepel I'll be kinder. I have wronged  
A feeling heart. Poor Pepel

PAOLO. Sad again!  
Where has the rapture gone of yesterday?

LANCIOTTO. Where are the leaves of Summer? Where the snows  
Of last year's Winter? Where the joys and  
griefs

That shut our eyes to yesternight's repose,  
And woke not on the morrow? Joys and  
griefs,

Huntsmen and hounds, ye follow us as game,  
Poor panting outcasts of your forest-law! 171  
Each cheers the others,—one with wild  
halloos,

And one with whines and howls.—A dreadful  
chase,

That only closes when horns sound *amort!*

PAOLO Thus ever up and down! Arouse  
yourself,

Balance your mind more evenly, and hunt  
For honey in the wormwood

LANCIOTTO. Or find gall  
Hid in the hanging chalice of the rose 178  
Which think you better? If my mood offend,  
We'll turn to business,—to the empty cares  
That make such poth in our feverish life  
When at Ravenna, did you ever hear  
Of any romance in Francesca's life?  
A love-tilt, gallantry, or anything  
That might have touched her heart?

PAOLO Not lightly even.  
I think her heart as virgin as her hand

LANCIOTTO Then there is hope.

PAOLO Of what?

LANCIOTTO Of winning her.

PAOLO Grammercy! Lanciotto, are you  
sane?

You boasted yesterday—

LANCIOTTO. And changed today  
Is that so strange? I always mend the fault  
Of yesterday with wisdom of today. 191  
She does not love me.

PAOLO. Pshaw! she marries you.  
'Twere proof enough for me.

LANCIOTTO. Perhaps she loves you.

PAOLO. Me, Lanciotto, me! For mercy's  
sake,

Blot out such thoughts—they madden me!  
What, love—

She love—yet marry you!

LANCIOTTO. It moves you much.

'Twas but a fleeting fancy, nothing more.

PAOLO You have such wild conjectures!

LANCIOTTO. Well, to me  
They seem quite tame; they are my bed-  
fellows. 199

Think, to a modest woman, what must be  
The loathsome kisses of an unloved man—  
A gross, coarse ruffian!

PAOLO. O! good heavens, forbear!

LANCIOTTO. What shocks you so?

PAOLO. The picture which you draw,  
Wrongsing yourself by horrid images.

LANCIOTTO. Until she love me, till I know,  
beyond

The cavi of a doubt, that she is mine—  
Wholly, past question—do you think that I  
Could so afflict the woman whom I love?

PAOLO You love her, Lanciotto!

LANCIOTTO Next to you,  
Dearer than anything in nature's scope. 210

PAOLO [*aside*] O! Heaven, that I must bear  
this! Yes, and more,—

More torture than I dare to think upon,  
Spread out before me with the coming years,  
And holds a record blotted with my tears,  
As that which I must suffer!

LANCIOTTO. Come, Paolo,  
Come help me woo I need your guiding  
eye,

To signal me, if I should sail astray.

PAOLO. O! torture, torture! [*Aside*]

LANCIOTTO You and I, perchance,  
Joining our forces, may prevail at last.  
They call love like a battle As for me, 220

I'm not a soldier equal to such wars,  
Despite my arduous schooling. Tutor me  
In the best arts of amorous strategy.

I am quite raw, Paolo. Glances, sighs,  
Sweets of the lip, and arrows of the eye,  
Shrugs, cringes, compliments, are new to me;  
And I shall handle them with little art.  
Will you instruct me?

PAOLO. Conquer for yourself.  
Two captains share one honor: keep it all.

What if I ask to share the spoils?

LANCIOTTO [*laughing*]. Hal hal  
I'll trust you, brother Let us go to her:  
Francesca is neglected while we jest. 232

I know not how it is, but your fair face,  
And noble figure, always cheer me up,



More than your words; there's healing in them,  
too,

For my worst griefs. Dear brother, let us in  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 2. *The Same. A Chamber in the Same*  
*FRANCESCA and RITTA discovered at the*  
*bridal toilet.*

RITTA [*sings*].

Ring high, ring high! to earth and sky;  
A lady goes a-wedding,  
The people shout, the show draws out,  
And smiles the bride is shedding.

No bell for you, ye ragged few,  
A beggar goes a-wedding;  
The people sneer, the thing's so queer,  
And tears the bride is shedding.

Ring low, ring low! dull bell of woe,  
One tone will do for either, 10  
The lady glad, and beggar sad,  
Have both lain down together

FRANCESCA. A mournful ballad!

RITTA I scarce knew I sang.  
I'm weary of this wreath These orange-  
flowers

Will never be adjusted to my taste  
Strive as I will, they ever look awry.  
My fingers ache!

FRANCESCA. Not more than my poor head  
There, leave them so.

RITTA That's better, yet not well

FRANCESCA. They are but fading things,  
not worth your pains 19

They'll scarce outlive the marriage merriment  
Ritza, these flowers are hypocrites, they show  
An outside gayety, yet die within,  
Minute by minute You shall see them fall,  
Black with decay, before the rites are o'er.

RITTA. How beautiful you are!

FRANCESCA. Fie, flatterer!  
White silk and laces, pearls and orange-  
flowers,

Would do as much for any one.

RITTA. No, no!  
You give them grace, they nothing give to  
you.

Why, after all, you make the wreath look well;  
But somewhat dingy, where it lies against 30  
Your pulsing temple, sullen with disgrace.

Ah! well, your Count should be the proudest  
man

That ever led a lady into church,  
Were he a modern Alexander. Pohl  
What are his trophies to a face like that?

FRANCESCA. I seem to please you, Ritza.

RITTA. Please yourself,

And you will please me better You are sad:  
I marked it ever since you saw the Count.  
I fear the splendor of his victories,  
And his sweet grace of manner—for, in faith,  
His is the gentlest, grandest character, 41  
Despite his—

FRANCESCA Well?

RITTA Despite his—

FRANCESCA Ritza, what?

RITTA. Despite his difference from Count  
Paolo — [FRANCESCA *staggers*]

What is the matter? [Supporting her.]

FRANCESCA Nothing, mere fatigue  
Hand me my kerchief I am better now.

What were you saying?

RITTA That I fear the Count

Has won your love

FRANCESCA Would that be cause for  
fear? [Laughs.]

RITTA O! yes, indeed! Once—long ago—  
I was

Just fool enough to tangle up my heart 49  
With one of these same men 'Twas terrible!  
Morning or evening, waking or asleep,  
I had no peace Sighs, groans, and standing  
tears,

Counted my moments through the blessed  
day

And then to this there was a dull, strange ache  
Forever sleeping in my breast,—a numbing  
pain,

That would not for an instant be forgot  
O! but I loved him so, that very feeling  
Became intolerable And I believed  
This false Giuseppe, too, for all the sneers,  
The shrugs and glances, of my intimates 60  
They slandered me and him, yet I believed.  
He was a noble, and his love to me  
Was a reproach, a shame, yet I believed.  
He wearied of me, tried to shake me off,  
Grew cold and formal, yet I would not doubt.

O! lady, I was true! Nor till I saw  
Giuseppe walk through the cathedral door  
With Dora, the rich usurer's niece, upon

The very arm to which I clung so oft, 69  
Did I so much as doubt him. Even then—  
More is my shame—I made excuses for him.

"Just this or that had forced him to the course  
Perhaps, he loved me yet—a little yet.  
His fortune, or his family, had driven  
My poor Giuseppe thus against his heart.  
The low are sorry judges for the great.

Yes, yes, Giuseppe loved me!" But at last  
I did awake It might have been with less 78  
There was no need of crushing me, to break  
My silly dream up In the street, it chanced,  
Dora and he went by me, and he laughed—  
A bold, bad laugh—right in my poor pale face,  
And turned and whispered Dora, and she  
laughed.

Ah! then I saw it all I've been awake,  
Ever since then, I warrant you And now  
I only pray for him sometimes, when friends  
Tell his base actions towards his hapless wife  
O! I am lying—I pray every night! [*Weeps.*]

FRANCESCA Poor Ritta. [*Weeping*]

RITTA. No! blest Ritta! Thank  
kind Heaven, 89

That kept me spotless when he tempted me,  
And my weak heart was pleading with his  
tongue

Pray, do not weep You spoil your eyes for  
me

But never love, oh! it is terrible!

FRANCESCA I'll strive against it

RITTA Do because, my lady,

Even a husband may be false, you know,

Ay, even to so sweet a wife as you.

Men have odd tastes They'll surfeit on the  
charms

Of Cleopatra, and then turn aside

To woo her blackamoor 'Tis so, in faith,

Or Dora's uncle's gold had ne'er outbid 100

The boundless measure of a love like mine

Think of it, lady, to weigh love with gold!

What could be meaner?

FRANCESCA Nothing, nothing, Ritta

Though gold's the standard measure of the  
world,

And seems to lighten everything beside.

Yet heap the other passions in the scale,

And balance them 'gaunst that which gold  
outweighs—

Against this love—and you shall see how  
light

The most supreme of them are in the posse!  
I speak by book and history; for love 110  
Shights my high fortunes. Under cloth of  
state

The urchin cowers from pompous etiquette,  
Waiving his function at the scowl of power,  
And seeks the rustic cot to stretch his limbs  
In homely freedom. I fulfill a doom.

We who are topmost on this heap of life  
Are nearer to Heaven's hand than you below;  
And so are used, as ready instruments,  
To work its purposes. Let envy hide  
Her witless forehead at a prince's name, 120  
And fix her hopes upon a clown's content.  
You, happy lowly, know not what it is  
To groan beneath the crown'd yoke of state,  
And bear the goadings of the scepter Ah!  
Fate drives us onward in a narrow way,  
Despite our boasted freedom.

[*Enter PAOLO, with Pages bearing torches*]

Gracious saints!

What brought you here?

PAOLO. The bridegroom waits

FRANCESCA He does?

Let him wait on forever! I'll not go!

O! dear Paolo—

PAOLO. Sister!

FRANCESCA It is well 129

I have been troubled with a sleepless night.

My brain is wild I know not what I say.

Pray, do not call me sister it is cold.

I never had a brother, and the name

Sounds harshly to me. When you speak to  
me,

Call me Francesca

PAOLO. You shall be obeyed

FRANCESCA. I would not be obeyed. I'd

have you do it

Because—because you love me—as a sister—

And of your own good-will, not my com-  
mand, 138

Would please me—Do you understand?

PAOLO. Too well! [*Aside*]

'Tis a nice difference

FRANCESCA. Yet you understand?

Say that you do.

PAOLO. I do.

FRANCESCA That pleases me.

'Tis flattering if our—friends appreciate  
Our nicer feelings.

PAOLO. I await you, lady.  
 FRANCESCA. Ritta, my gloves.—Ah! yes, I have them on;  
 Though I'm not quite prepared. Arrange my veil;  
 It folds too closely. That will do; retire.

[RITTA re-enters.]  
 So, Count Paolo, you have come, hot haste,  
 To lead me to the church,—to have your share 148

In my undoing? And you came, in sooth,  
 Because they sent you? You are very tame!  
 And if they sent, was it for you to come?  
 PAOLO. Lady, I do not understand this scorn.

I came, as is my duty, to escort  
 My brother's bride to him. When next you're called,

I'll send a lackey

FRANCESCA I have angered you.

PAOLO With reason I would not appear to you

Low or contemptible

FRANCESCA Why not to me?

PAOLO Lady, I'll not be catechized

FRANCESCA. Hal Count!

PAOLO No! if you press me further, I will say

A word to madden you—Stand still! You stray 160

Around the margin of a precipice  
 I know what pleasure 'us to pluck the flowers  
 That hang above destruction, and to gaze  
 Into the dread abyss, to see such things  
 As may be safely seen. 'Tis perilous  
 The eye grows dizzy as we gaze below,  
 And a wild wish possesses us to spring  
 Into the vacant air. Beware, beware!  
 Lest this unholy fascination grow 169  
 Too strong to conquer!

FRANCESCA. You talk wildly, Count;  
 There's not a gleam of sense in what you say,  
 I cannot hit your meaning.

PAOLO. Lady, come!

FRANCESCA. Count, you are cruel! [*Weeps.*]

PAOLO. O! no, I would be kind.

But now, while reason overrides my heart,  
 And seeming anger plays its braggart part—  
 In heaven's name, come!

FRANCESCA. One word—one question more:

Is it your wish this marriage should proceed?

PAOLO. It is

FRANCESCA. Come on! You shall not take my hand.

I'll walk alone—now, and forever!

PAOLO [*taking her hand*] Sister!

[*Exeunt PAOLO and FRANCESCA, with Pages.*]

RITTA. O! misery, misery!—it is plain as day— 180

She loves Paolo! Why will those I love  
 Forever get themselves ensnared, and Heaven  
 Forever call on me to succor them?  
 Here was the mystery, then—the sighs and tears,

The troubled slumbers, and the waking dreams!

And now she's walking through the chapel-door,

Her bridal robe above an aching heart,  
 Dressed up for sacrifice 'Tis terrible!  
 And yet she'll smile and do it Smile, for years, 189

Until her heart breaks, and the nurses ask  
 The doctor of the cause. He'll answer too,  
 In hard thick Lann, and believe himself  
 O! my dear mistress! Heaven, pray torture me!

Send back Giuseppe, let him run me,  
 And scorn me after, but, sweet heaven, spare her!

I'll follow her. O! what a world is this!

[*Exu.*]

SCENE 3 *The Same. Interior of the Cathedral.*  
 LANCIOTTO, FRANCESCA, PAOLO, MALATESTA, GUIDO, RITTA, PEPE, *Lords, Knights, Priests, Pages, a bridal-train of Ladies, Soldiers, Citizens, Attendants, &c., discovered before the High Altar Organ music The rites being over, they advance*

MALATESTA. By heaven—

PEPE. O! uncle, uncle, you're in church!

MALATESTA I'll break your head, knave!

PEPE. I claim sanctuary.

MALATESTA. Why, bridegroom, will you never kiss the bride?

We all are mad to follow you.

PEPE. Yes, yes;

Here was Paolo wetting his red lips  
 For the last minute. Kiss, and give him room.

MALATESTA. You heaven-forsaken imp, be quiet now!

PEPE. Then there'd be naught worth hearing

MALATESTA. Bridegroom, come!

PEPE. Lord! he don't like it! Hey!—I told you so— 9

He backs at the first step Does he not know His trouble's just begun?

LANCIOTTO. Gentle Francesca, Custom imposes somewhat on thy lips I'll make my levy [*Kisses her The others follow.*] [*Aside*] Ha! she shrank! I felt Her body tremble, and her quivering lips Seemed dying under mine! I heard a sigh, Such as breaks hearts—O! no, a very groan, And then she turned a sickly, miserable look

On pale Paolo, and he shivered too! There is a mystery hangs around her,—ay, Paolo knows it too —By all the saints, 20 I'll make him tell it, at the dagger's point! Paolo!—here! I do adjure you, brother, By the great love I bear you, to reveal The secret of Francesca's grief

PAOLO I cannot

LANCIOTTO. She told you nothing?

PAOLO Nothing

LANCIOTTO Not a word?

PAOLO Not one

LANCIOTTO. What heard you at Ravenna, then?

PAOLO. Nothing.

LANCIOTTO. Here?

PAOLO Nothing

LANCIOTTO Not the slightest hint?—

Don't stammer, man! Speak quick! I am in haste

PAOLO Never

LANCIOTTO. What know you?

PAOLO. Nothing that concerns Your happiness, Lanciotto If I did, 30 Would I not tell unquestioned?

LANCIOTTO. Would you not? You ask a question for me? answer it.

PAOLO. I have

LANCIOTTO. You juggle, you turn deadly pale, Fumble your dagger, stand with head half round,

Tapping your feet.—You dare not look at me!

By Satan! Count Paolo, let me say, You look much like a full-convicted thief!

PAOLO. Brother!—

LANCIOTTO. Pshaw! brother! You deceive me, sir

You and that lady have a devil's league, To keep a devil's secret. Is it thus 40 You deal with me? Now, by the light above,

I'd give a dukedom for some fair pretext To fly you all! She does not love me? Well, I could bear that, and live away from her. Love would be sweet, but want of it becomes

An early habit to such men as I But you—ah! there's the sorrow—whom I loved

An infant in your cradle, you who grew Up in my heart, with every inch you gained, You whom I loved for every quality, 50 Good, bad, and common, in your natural stock,

Ay, for your very beauty! It is strange, you'll say,

For such a crippled horror to do that, Against the custom of his kind! O! yes, I love, and you betray me!

PAOLO Lanciotto, This is sheer frenzy. Join your bride.

LANCIOTTO I'll not! What, go to her, to feel her very flesh Crawl from my touch? to hear her sigh and moan,

As if God plagued her? Must I come to that? Must I endure your hellish mystery 60 With my own wife, and roll my eyes away In sentimental bliss? No, no! until I go to her, with confident belief In her integrity and candid love, I'll shun her as a leper! [*Alarm-bells toll.*]

MALATESTA What is that?

[*Enter, hastily, a MESSENGER in disorder.*]

MESSENGER. My lord, the Ghibelins are up—

LANCIOTTO. And I Will put them down again! I thank thee, Heaven, For this unlooked-for aid! [*Aside.*]

MALATESTA. What force have they?

LANCIOTTO. It matters not,—nor yet the time, place, cause,

Of their rebellion. I would throttle it, 70  
Were it a riot, or a drunken brawl

MALATESTA. Nay, son, your bride—

LANCIOTTO. My bride will pardon me;  
Bless me, perhaps, as I am going forth;—  
Thank me, perhaps, if I should ne'er return.  
[Aside.]

A soldier's duty has no bridals in it

PAOLO. Lanciotto, this is folly. Let me take  
Your usual place of honor.

LANCIOTTO [laughing]. Hal hal hal  
What! thou, a tilt-yard soldier, lead my  
troops!

My wife will ask it shortly. Not a word  
Of opposition from the new-made bride? 80  
Nay, she looks happier. O! accursed day,  
That I was mated to an empty heart! [Aside.]

MALATESTA. But, son—

LANCIOTTO. Well, father?

PEPE. Uncle, let him go.  
He'll find it cooler on a battlefield  
Than in his—

LANCIOTTO. Hark! the fool speaks  
oracles.

You, soldiers, who are used to follow me,  
And front our charges, emulous to bear  
The shock of battle on your forward arms,—  
Why stand ye in amazement? Do your  
swords

Stick to their scabbards with inglorious rust?  
Or has repose so weakened your big hearts,  
That you can dream with trumpets at your  
ears? 92

Out with your steel! It shames me to be-  
hold

Such tardy welcome to my war-worn blade!  
[Draws.]

[The Knights and Soldiers draw.]

Hol draw our forces out! Strike camp, sound  
drums,

And set us on our marches! As I live,

I pity the next foeman who relies

On me for mercy! Farewell! to you all—

To all alike—a soldier's short farewell!

[Going.]

[PAOLO stands before him.]

Out of my way, thou juggler! [Exit.]

PAOLO. He is gone!

## ACT V

### SCENE 1. *The Same. The Garden of the Castle.*

[Enter PEPE, singing.]

PEPE.

'Tis jolly to walk in the shady greenwood  
With a damsel by your side;

'Tis jolly to walk from the chapel-door,  
With the hand of your pretty bride;

'Tis jolly to rest your weary head,  
When life runs low and hope is fled,  
On the heart where you confide:

'Tis jolly, jolly, jolly, they say,  
They say—but I never tried.

Nor shall I ever till they dress their girls 10  
In motley suits, and pair us, to increase  
The race of fools. 'T would be a noble thing,  
A motley woman, had she wit enough  
To bear the bell. But there's the misery—  
You may make princes out of any stuff,  
Fools come by nature. She'll make fifty  
kings—

Good, hearty tyrants, sound, cruel gover-  
nors—

For one fine fool There is Paolo, now,  
A sweet-faced fellow with a wicked heart—  
Talk of a flea, and you begin to scratch 20  
Lo! here he comes. And there's fierce crook-  
back's bride

Walking beside him—O, how gingerly!  
Take care, my love! that is the very pace  
We trip to hell with Hunchback is away—  
That was a fair escape for you, but, then,  
The devil's ever with us, and that's worse  
See, the Ravenna giglet, Mistress Ritta,  
And melancholy as a cow—How's this?  
I'll step aside, and watch you, pretty folks

[Hides behind the bushes.]

[Enter PAOLO and FRANCESCA, followed by  
RITTA. He seats himself in an arbor, and  
reads.]

FRANCESCA. Ritta.

RITTA. My lady.

FRANCESCA. You look tired

RITTA. I'm not. 30

FRANCESCA. Go to your chamber.

RITTA. I would rather stay,

If it may please you. I require a walk

And the fresh atmosphere of breathing flowers,  
To stir my blood. I am not very well.

FRANCESCA. I knew it, child. Go to your chamber, dear.

PAOLO has a book to read to me

RITTA. What, the romance? I should so love to hear!

I dote on poetry, and Count Paolo 38  
Sweetens the Tuscan with his mellow voice.

I'm weary now, quite weary, and would rest.

FRANCESCA. Just now you wished to walk  
RITTA. Ah! did I so?

Walking, or resting, I would stay with you  
FRANCESCA. The Count objects He told  
me, yesterday,

That you were restless while he read to me,  
And sturred your feet amid the grass, and  
sighed,

And yawned, until he almost paused  
RITTA Indeed  
I will be quiet.

FRANCESCA But he will not read

RITTA Let me go ask him

[Runs toward PAOLO]

FRANCESCA Stop! Come hither, RITTA  
[She returns]

I saw your new embroidery in the hall,—  
The needle in the midst of Argus' eyes; 50  
It should be finished

RITTA I will bring it here —  
O, not my finger's sore, I cannot work.

FRANCESCA Go to your room

RITTA Let me remain, I pray.  
'Tis better, lady, you may wish for me.  
I know you will be sorry if I go

FRANCESCA I shall not, girl. Do as I order  
you.

Will you be headstrong?

RITTA. Do you wish it, then?

FRANCESCA Yes, RITTA

RITTA. Yet you made pre-  
texts enough,

Before you ordered.

FRANCESCA. You are insolent. 59  
Will you remain against my will?

RITTA. Yes, lady;

Rather than not remain.

FRANCESCA Hal impudent!

RITTA. You wrong me, gentle mistress.  
Love like mine

Does not ask questions of propriety,  
Nor stand on manners. I would do you good,  
Even while you smote me; I would push you  
back,

With my last effort, from the crumbling edge  
Of some high rock o'er which you toppled  
me.

FRANCESCA What do you mean?

RITTA. I know.

FRANCESCA. Know what?

RITTA. Too much.

Pray, do not ask me.

FRANCESCA. Speak!

RITTA. I know—dear lady,

Be not offended—

FRANCESCA. Tell me, simpleton! 70

RITTA You know I worship you, you  
know I'd walk

Straight into ruin for a whim of yours,

You know—

FRANCESCA I know you act the fool Talk  
sense!

RITTA. I know Paolo loves you.

FRANCESCA. Should he not?

He is my brother.

RITTA. More than brother should

FRANCESCA Hal are you certain?

RITTA Yes, of more than that.

FRANCESCA. Of more?

RITTA. Yes, lady, for you love  
him, too

I've said it! Fling me to the carrion crows,  
Kill me by inches, boil me in the pot 79  
Count Guido promised me,—but O, beware!  
Back, while you may! Make me the sufferer,  
But save yourself!

FRANCESCA Now, are you not ashamed  
To look me in the face with that bold brow?  
I am amazed!

RITTA. I am a woman, lady,  
I too have been in love; I know its ways,  
Its arts, and its deceptions. Your frowning face,  
And seeming indignation, do not cheat  
Your heart is in my hand.

PAOLO [calls]. Francescal

FRANCESCA. Hence,  
Thou wanton-hearted minion! Hence, I say!—  
And never look me in the face again!— 90  
Hence, thou insulting slave!

RITTA [clinging to her]. O lady, lady—

FRANCESCA. Begone. [Throws her off.]

RITTA. I have no friends—no one to love—  
O, spare me!

FRANCESCA. Hencel

RITTA. Was it for this I loved—  
Cared for you more than my own happiness—  
Ever at heart your slave—without a wish  
For greater recompense than your stray  
smiles?

PAOLO *[calls]*. Francescal

FRANCESCA. Hurry!

RITTA. I am gone Alas!  
God bless you, lady! God take care of you,  
When I am far away! Alas, alas!

*[Exit weeping]*

FRANCESCA. Poor girl!—but were she all  
the world to me, 100

And held my future in her tender grasp,  
I'd cast her off, without a second thought,  
To savage death, for dear Paolo's sake!  
Paolo, hither! Now he comes to me,  
I feel his presence, though I see him not,  
Stealing upon me like the fervid glow  
Of morning sunshine. Now he comes too  
near—

He touches me—O Heaven!

PAOLO. Our poem waits  
I have been reading while you talked with  
Ritita. 109

How did you get her off?

FRANCESCA. By some device  
She will not come again.

PAOLO. I hate the girl.  
She seems to stand between me and the light  
And now for the romance Where left we off?

FRANCESCA. Where Lancelot and Queen  
Guenevra strayed

Along the forest, in the youth of May  
You marked the figure of the birds that sang  
Their melancholy farewell to the sun—  
Rich in his loss, their sorrow glorified—  
Like gentle mourners o'er a great man's  
grave

Was it not there? No, no; 'twas where they  
sat 120

Down on the bank, by one impulsive wish  
That neither uttered.

PAOLO *[turning over the book]*. Here it is.  
*[Reads.]* "So sat

Guenevra and Sir Lancelot"—"T'were well  
To follow them in that.

*[They sit upon a bank.]*

FRANCESCA.

I listen; read.

Nay, do not; I can wait, if you desire.

PAOLO. My dagger frets me, let me take it  
off. *[Rises.]*

In thoughts of love, we'll lay our weapons  
by.

*[Lays aside his dagger, and sits again.]*

Draw closer I am weak in voice today.

*[Reads]*

"So sat Guenevra and Sir Lancelot, 129

Under the blaze of the descending sun,  
But all his cloudy splendors were forgot.

Each bore a thought, the only secret one,  
Which each had hidden from the other's heart,  
That with sweet mystery well-nigh over-  
run

Anon, Sir Lancelot, with gentle start,  
Put by the ripples of her golden hair,  
Gazing upon her with his lips apart.

He marvelled human thing could be so fair,  
Essayed to speak, but, in the very deed, 139

His words expired of self-betrayed despair  
Little she helped him, at his direst need,  
Roving her eyes o'er hull, and wood, and  
sky,

Peering intently at the meanest weed,  
Ay, doing aught but look in Lancelot's eye  
Then, with the small pique of her velvet shoe,  
Uprooted she each herb that blossomed  
nigh,

Or strange wild figures in the dust she drew,  
Until she felt Sir Lancelot's arm around  
Her waist, upon her cheek his breath like dew

While through his fingers timidly he wound  
Her shining locks, and, haply, when he  
brushed 151

Her ivory skin, Guenevra nearly swooned  
For where he touched, the quivering surface  
blushed,

Firing her blood with most contagious heat,  
Till brow, cheek, neck, and bosom, all were  
flushed

Each heart was listening to the other beat.  
As twinborn lilies on one golden stalk,  
Drooping with Summer, in warm languor  
meet,

So met their faces. Down the forest walk  
Sir Lancelot looked—he looked east, west,  
north, south— 160

No soul was nigh, his dearest wish to bask:  
She smiled; he kissed her full upon the  
mouth." *[Kisses FRANCESCA.]*

I'll read no more!

*[Starts up, dashing down the book.]*

FRANCESCA. Paolo!

PAOLO. I am mad!  
The torture of unnumbered hours is o'er,  
The straining cord has broken, and my heart  
Riots in free delirium! O, Heaven!  
I struggled with it, but it mastered me!  
I fought against it, but it beat me down!  
I prayed, I wept, but Heaven was deaf to me;  
And every tear rolled backward on my  
heart, 170  
To blight and poison!

FRANCESCA. And dost thou regret?  
PAOLO. The love? No, no! I'd dare it all  
again,  
Its direst agonies and meanest fears,  
For that one kiss Away with fond remorse!  
Here, on the brink of ruin, we two stand;  
Lock hands with me, and brave the fearful  
plunge!

Thou canst not name a terror so profound  
That I will look or falter from Be bold!  
I know thy love—I knew it long ago—  
Trembled and fled from it But now I clasp  
The peril to my breast, and ask of thee 181  
A kindred desperation

FRANCESCA [*throwing herself into his arms*].  
Take me all,—

Body and soul The women of our clime  
Do never give away but half a heart  
I have not part to give, part to withhold,  
In selfish safety When I saw thee first,  
Riding alone amid a thousand men,  
Sole in the luster of thy majesty,  
And Guido da Polenta said to me,  
"Daughter, behold thy husband!" with a  
bound 190  
My heart went forth to meet thee He de-  
ceived,

He lied to me—ah! that's the aptest word—  
And I believed Shall I not turn again,  
And meet him, craft with craft? Paolo, love,  
Thou'rt dull—thou'rt dying like a feeble fire  
Before the sunshine Was it but a blaze,  
A flash of glory, and a long, long night?

PAOLO No, darling, no! You could not  
bend me back,  
My course is onward; but my heart is sick  
With coming fears.

FRANCESCA. Away with them! Must I  
Teach thee to love? and reinform the ear 201  
Of thy spent passion with some sorcery  
To raise the chilly dead?

PAOLO. Thy lips have not  
A sorcery to rouse me as this spell.

[*Kisses her.*]  
FRANCESCA. I give thy kisses back to thee  
again  
And, like a spendthrift, only ask of thee  
To take while I can give.

PAOLO. Give, give forever!  
Have we not touched the height of human  
bliss?

And if the sharp rebound may hurl us back  
Among the prostrate, did we not soar once?—  
Taste heavenly nectar, banquet with the gods  
On high Olympus? If they cast us, now,  
Amid the furies, shall we not go down 219  
With rich ambrosia clinging to our lips,  
And richer memories settled in our hearts?  
FRANCESCA.

FRANCESCA. Love?  
PAOLO. The sun is sinking low  
Upon the ashes of his fading pyre,  
And gray possesses the eternal blue,  
The evening star is stealing after him,  
Fixed, like a beacon, on the prow of night;  
The world is shutting up its heavy eye  
Upon the stir and bustle of today,— 222  
On what shall it awake?

FRANCESCA. On love that gives  
Joy at all seasons, changes night to day,  
Makes sorrow smile, plucks out the barbed dart  
Of moaning anguish, pours celestial balm  
In all the gaping wounds of earth, and lulls  
The nervous fancies of unsheltered fear  
Into a slumber sweet as infancy's!  
On love that laughs at the impending sword,  
And puts aside the shield of caution, cries,  
To all its enemies, "Come, strike me now!—  
Now, while I hold my kingdom, while my  
crown 233

Of amaranth and myrtle is yet green,  
Undimmed, unwithered, for I cannot tell  
That I shall e'er be happier!" Dear Paolo,  
Would you lapse down from misery to death,  
Tottering through sorrow and infirmity?  
Or would you perish at a single blow,  
Cut off amid your wildest revelry, 240  
Falling among the wine-cups and the flowers,  
And tasting Bacchus when your drowsy sense  
First gazed around eternity? Come, love!  
The present whispers joy to us, we'll hear  
The voiceless future when its turn arrives.



PAOLO. Thou art a siren. Sing, forever  
sing;

Hearing thy voice, I cannot tell what fate  
Thou hast provided when the song is o'er;—  
But I will venture it.

FRANCESCA. In, in, my love!  
[*Exeunt.*]

[*PEPE steals from behind the bushes*]

PEPE O, brother Lanciotto!—O, my  
stars!— 250

If this thing lasts, I simply shall go mad!  
[*Laughs, and rolls on the ground*]  
O Lord! to think my pretty lady puss  
Has tricks like this, and we ne'er know of it!  
I tell you, Lanciotto, you and I  
Must have a patent for our foolery!  
"She smiled, he kissed her full upon the  
mouth!"—

There's the beginning, where's the end of it?  
O poesyl debauch thee only once, 258  
And thou'rt the greatest wanton in the world!  
O cousin Lanciotto—ho, ho, ho! [*Laughing*]  
Can a man die of laughter? Here we sat;  
Mistress Francesca so demure and calm,  
Paolo grand, poetical, sublime!—  
Eh! what is this? Paolo's dagger? Good!  
Here is more proof, sweet cousin Broken-back  
"In thoughts of love, we'll lay our weapons  
by!" [*Mimicking PAOLO*]

That's very pretty! Here's its counterpart:  
In thoughts of hate, we'll pick them up  
again [*Takes the dagger*]  
Now for my soldier, now for crook-backed  
Mars! 269

Ere long all Rimini will be ablaze  
He'll kill me! Yes what then? That's nothing  
new,

Except to me; I'll bear for custom's sake  
More blood will follow, like the royal sun,  
I shall go down in purple. Fools for luck;  
The proverb holds like iron I must run,  
Ere laughter smother me—O, ho, ho, ho!  
[*Exit laughing*]

SCENE 2 *A camp among the Hills.*  
*Before LANCIOTTO'S tent.*

[*Enter, from the tent, LANCIOTTO.*]

LANCIOTTO. The camp is strangely quiet.  
Not a sound  
Breaks nature's high solemnity. The sun

Repeats again his everyday decline;  
Yet all the world looks sadly after him,  
As if the customary sight were new.  
Yon moody sentinel goes slowly by,  
Through the thick mists of evening, with his  
spear

Trailed at a funeral hold. Long shadows  
creep,  
From things beyond the furthest range of  
sight,

Up to my very feet. These mystic shades 10  
Are of the earth, the light that causes them,  
And teaches us the quick comparison,  
Is all from heaven Ah! restless man might  
crawl

With patience through his shadowy destiny,  
If he were senseless to the higher light  
Towards which his soul aspires. How grand  
and vast

Is yonder show of heavenly pageantry!  
How mean and narrow is the earthly stand  
From which we gaze on it! Magnificent,  
O God, art thou amid the sunsets! Ah! 20  
What heart in Rimini is softened now,  
Towards my defects, by this grand spectacle?  
Perchance, Paolo now forgives the wrong  
Of my hot spleen Perchance, Francesca now  
Wishes me back, and turns a tenderer eye  
On my poor person and ill-mannered ways,  
Fashions excuses for me, schools her heart  
Through duty into love, and ponders o'er  
The sacred meaning in the name of wife  
Dreams, dreams! Poor fools, we squander  
love away 30

On thankless borrowers, when bankrupt quite,  
We sit and wonder of their honesty  
Love, take a lesson from the usurer,  
And never lend but on security.  
Captain!

[*Enter a CAPTAIN*]

CAPTAIN My lord

LANCIOTTO. They worsted us today.

CAPTAIN. Not much, my lord.

LANCIOTTO. With little loss, indeed  
Their strength is in position Mark you, sir.

[*Draws on the ground with his sword.*]  
Here is the pass; it opens towards the plain,  
With gradual widening, like a lady's fan. 39  
The hills protect their flanks on either hand;  
And, as you see, we cannot show more front

Than their advance may give us. Then, the  
rocks

Are sorry footing for our horse. Just here,  
Close in against the left-hand hills, I marked  
A strip of wood, extending down the gorge  
Behind that wood dispose your force ere  
dawn.

I shall begin the onset, then give ground,  
And draw them out, while you, behind the  
wood,

Must steal along, until their flank and rear  
Oppose your column. Then set up a shout,  
Burst from the wood, and drive them on our  
spears. 51

They have no outpost in the wood, I know,  
'Tis too far from their center On the mor-  
row,

When they are flushed with seeming victory,  
And think my whole division in full rout,  
They will not pause to scrutinize the wood,  
So you may enter boldly We will use  
The heart today's repulse has given to them,  
For our advantage Do you understand?

CAPTAIN Clearly, my lord

LANCIOTTO If they discover you,  
Before you gain your point, wheel, and re-  
treat 61

Upon my rear If your attack should fail  
To strike them with a panic, and they turn  
In too great numbers on your small com-  
mand,

Scatter your soldiers through the wood  
Let each seek safety for himself

CAPTAIN. I see.

LANCIOTTO Have Pluto shod, he cast a  
shoe today:

Let it be done at once My helmet, too,  
Is worn about the lacing, look to that.  
Where is my armorer?

CAPTAIN. At his forge

LANCIOTTO. Your charge  
Must be at sunrise—just at sunrise, sir— 71  
Neither before nor after You must march  
At moonset, then, to gain the point ere dawn  
That is enough

CAPTAIN. Good-even! [Going]

LANCIOTTO Stay, stay, stay!  
My sword-hilt feels uneasy in my grasp;

[Gives his sword.]

Have it repaired; and grind the point. Strike  
hard!

I'll teach these Ghibelins a lesson. Hal  
[Loud laughter within.]

What is that clamor?

[Enter hastily PEPE, tattered and  
travel-stained]

PEPE News from Rimini  
[Falls exhausted.]

LANCIOTTO Is that you, Pepe? Captain, a  
good-night!

[Exit CAPTAIN]

I never saw you in such straits before. 80  
Wit without words!

PEPE That's better than—O!—  
O!— [Panting.]

Words without wit

LANCIOTTO [laughing]. You'll die a jester,  
Pepe

PEPE. If so, I'll leave the needy all my wit.  
You, you shall have it, cousin.—O! O!  
O! [Panting]

Those devils in the hills, the Ghibelins,  
Ran me almost to death. My lord—ha! hal  
[Laughing]

It all comes back to me—O! Lord 'a mercy!—  
The garden, and the lady, and the Count  
Not to forget the poetry—ho! hol

[Laughing]

O! cousin Lanciotto, such a wife, 90  
And such a brother! Hear me, ere I burst!

LANCIOTTO. You're pleasant, Pepe!

PEPE Am I?—Ho! hol hol  
[Laughing.]

You ought to be, your wife's a—

LANCIOTTO. What?

PEPE A lady—  
A lady, I suppose, like all the rest.

I am not in their secrets Such a fellow  
As Count Paolo is your man for that.  
I'll tell you something, if you'll swear a bit

LANCIOTTO. Swear what?

PEPE. First, swear to listen till  
the end.—

O! you may rave, curse, howl, and tear your  
hair; 99

But you must listen.

LANCIOTTO. For your jest's sake? Well.

PEPE You swear?

LANCIOTTO. I do

PEPE Next, swear to know the truth.

LANCIOTTO. The truth of a fool's story!

PEPE. You mistake.  
Now, look you, cousin! You have often  
marked—

I know, for I have seen—strange glances pass  
Between Paolo and your lady wife.—

LANCIOTTO. Hal Pepe!

PEPE. Now I touch you to the quick.  
I know the reason of those glances.

LANCIOTTO. Hal  
Speak! or I'll throttle you! [Seizes him.]

PEPE. Your way is odd  
Let go my gullet, and I'll talk you deaf. 109

Swear my last oath only to know the truth

LANCIOTTO. But that may trouble me

PEPE. Your honor lies—  
Your precious honor, cousin Chivalry—  
Lies bleeding with a terrible great gash,  
Without its knowledge. Swear!

LANCIOTTO. My honor? Speak!

PEPE. You swear?

LANCIOTTO. I swear Your news is ill, per-  
chance?

PEPE. Ill! would I bring it else? Am I in-  
clined

To run ten leagues with happy news for you?  
O, Lord, that's jolly!

LANCIOTTO. You infernal imp,  
Out with your story, ere I strangle you!

PEPE. Then take a fast hold on your two  
great oaths, 120

To steady tottering manhood, and attend  
Last eve, about this hour, I took a stroll  
Into the garden—Are you listening, cousin?

LANCIOTTO. I am all ears.

PEPE. Why, so an ass might say

LANCIOTTO. Will you be serious?

PEPE. Wait a while, and we  
Will both be graver than a churchyard. Well,  
Down the long walk, towards me, came your  
wife,

With Count Paolo walking at her side  
It was a pretty sight, and so I stepped  
Into the bushes. Rita came with them, 130

And lady Fanny had a grievous time  
To get her off. That made me curious.

Anon, the pair sat down upon a bank,  
To read a poem;—the tenderest romance,  
All about Lancelot and Queen Guenevra.  
The Count read well—I'll say that much for  
him—

Only he stuck too closely to the text,

Got too much wrapped up in the poesy,  
And played Sir Lancelot's actions, out and  
out, 139

On Queen Francesca. Nor in royal parts  
Was she so backward When he struck the  
line—

"She smiled, he kissed her full upon the  
mouth",

Your lady smiled, and, by the saints above,  
Count Paolo carried out the sentiment!  
Can I not move you?

LANCIOTTO. With such trash as this?  
And so you ran ten leagues to tell a lie?—  
Run home again

PEPE. I am not ready yet.  
After the kiss, up springs our amorous Count,  
Flings Queen Guenevra and Sir Lancelot  
Straight to the devil; growls and snaps his  
teeth, 150

Laughs, weeps, howls, dances, talks about his  
love,

His madness, suffering, and the Lord knows  
what,

Bullying the lady like a thief. But she,  
All this hot time, looked cool and mischievous,  
Gave him his halter to the very end;  
And when he calmed a little, up she steps  
And takes him by the hand You should have  
seen

How tame the furious fellow was at once!  
How he came down, snivelled, and cowed to her,  
And fell to kissing her again! It was 160

A perfect female triumph! Such a scene  
A man might pass through life and never see.

More sentiment then followed,—buckets full  
Of washy words, not worth my memory  
But all the while she wound his Countship up,  
Closer and closer, till at last—tu!—wt!—  
She scoops him up, and off she carries him,  
Fish for her table! Follow, if you can,  
My fancy fails me All this time you smile!

LANCIOTTO. You should have been a poet,  
not a fool 170

PEPE. I might be both

LANCIOTTO. You made no record, then?  
Must this fine story die for want of ink?  
Left you no trace in writing?

PEPE. None.

LANCIOTTO. Alas!  
Then you have told it? 'Tis but stale, my boy;  
I'm second hearer

PEPE. You are first, in faith.  
 LANCIOTTO. In truth?  
 PEPE. In sadness. You have  
 got it fresh.  
 I had no time, I itched to reach your ear.  
 Now go to Rimini, and see yourself.  
 You'll find them in the garden. Lovers are  
 Like walking ghosts, they always haunt the  
 spot 180  
 Of their misdeeds  
 LANCIOTTO. But have I heard you out?  
 You told me all?  
 PEPE. All; I have nothing left.  
 LANCIOTTO. Why, you brain-stricken  
 idiot, to trust  
 Your story and your body in my grasp!  
 [Seizes him]  
 PEPE. Unhand me, cousin!  
 LANCIOTTO. When I drop you, Pepe,  
 You'll be at rest.  
 PEPE. I will betray you—O!  
 LANCIOTTO. Not till the judgment day  
 [They struggle]  
 PEPE [drawing PAOLO's dagger] Take that!  
 LANCIOTTO [wresting the dagger from him]  
 Well meant,  
 But poorly done! Here's my return  
 [Stabs him]  
 PEPE. O! beast! [Falls]  
 This I expected it is naught—Ha! hal 189  
 [Laughing]  
 I'll go to sleep; but you—what you will bear!  
 Hunchback, come here!  
 LANCIOTTO Fie, say your prayers.  
 PEPE. Hark, hark!  
 Paolo hired me, swine, to murder you  
 LANCIOTTO That is a lie, you never cared  
 for gold  
 PEPE He did, I say! I'll swear it, by  
 heaven!  
 Do you believe me?  
 LANCIOTTO No!  
 PEPE. You lie! you lie!  
 Look at the dagger, cousin—Ugh!—good-  
 night! [Dies.]  
 LANCIOTTO. O! horrible! It was a gift of  
 mine—  
 He never laid it by. Speak, speak, fool, speak!  
 [Shakes the body.]  
 How didst thou get it?—speak! Thou'rt  
 warm—not dead—

Thou hast a tongue—O! speak! Come, come,  
 a jest— 200  
 Another jest from those thin mocking lips!  
 Call me a cripple—hunchback—what thou  
 wilt,  
 But speak to me! He cannot. Now, by heaven,  
 I'll stir this business till I find the truth!  
 Am I a fool? It is a silly lie,  
 Coined by yon villain with his last base  
 breath  
 What hol without there!  
 [Enter CAPTAIN and Soldiers.]  
 CAPTAIN Did you call, my  
 lord?  
 LANCIOTTO. Did Heaven thunder? Are  
 you deaf, you louts?  
 Saddle my horse! What are you staring at?  
 Is it your first look at a dead man? Well, 210  
 Then look your fill! Saddle my horse, I say!  
 Black Pluto—stir! Bear that assassin hence  
 Chop him to pieces, if he move. My horse!  
 CAPTAIN My lord, he's shoeing.  
 LANCIOTTO Did I ask for shoes?  
 I want my horse. Run, fellow, run! Un-  
 barbed—  
 My lightest harness on his back. Fly, fly!  
 [Exit a Soldier]  
 [The others pick up the body]  
 Ask him, I pray you, if he did not lie!  
 CAPTAIN The man is dead, my lord.  
 LANCIOTTO [laughing] Then do not ask him!  
 [Exeunt Soldiers with the body]  
 By Jupiter, I shall go mad, I think!  
 [Walks about.]  
 CAPTAIN Something disturbs him Do you  
 mark the spot 220  
 Of purple on his brow? [Apart to a SOLDIER.]  
 SOLDIER. Then blood must flow  
 LANCIOTTO. Boy, boy! [Enter a Page] My  
 cloak and riding-staff Quick, quick!  
 How you all lag! [Exit Page.] I ride to  
 Rimini  
 Skirmish tomorrow Wait till my return—  
 I shall be back at sundown. You shall see  
 What slaughter is then!  
 CAPTAIN Ho! turn out a guard!—  
 LANCIOTTO. I wish no guard; I ride alone  
 [Re-enter Page, with a cloak and staff.]  
 [Taking them] Well done!  
 Thou art a pretty boy.—And now my horse!

[Enter a SOLDIER.]

SOLDIER. Pluto is saddled—

LANCIOTTO 'Tis a damned black lie!

SOLDIER. Indeed, my lord—

LANCIOTTO O! comrade, pardon me:  
I talk at random What, Paolo too,— 231

A boy whom I have trotted on my knee!

Pohl I abuse myself by such a thought

Francesca may not love me, may love him—

Indeed she ought, but when an angel comes

To play the wanton on this filthy earth,

Then I'll believe her guilty Look you, sir!

Am I quite calm?

CAPTAIN Quite calm, my lord.

LANCIOTTO You see  
No trace of passion on my face?—No sign

Of ugly humors, doubts, or fears, or aught

That may disfigure God's intelligence? 241

I have a grievous charge against you, sir,

That may involve your life; and if you doubt

The candor of my judgment, choose your  
time

Shall I arraign you now?

CAPTAIN. Now, if you please

I'll trust my cause to you and innocence

At any time. I am not conscious—

LANCIOTTO Pshaw!

I try myself, not you And I am calm—

That is your verdict—and dispassionate?

CAPTAIN So far as I can judge

LANCIOTTO. 'Tis well, 'tis well!

Then I will ride to Rimini. Good-night! 251

[Exit]

[The others look after him, amazedly, and  
exeunt]

### SCENE 3 Rimini The Garden of the Castle

[Enter PAOLO and FRANCESCA]

FRANCESCA. Thou hast resolved?

PAOLO. I've sworn it

FRANCESCA Ah, you men

Can talk of love and duty in a breath;

Love while you like, forget when you are  
tired,

And salve your falsehood with some whole-  
some saw;

But we, poor women, when we give our hearts,  
Give all, lose all, and never ask it back

PAOLO. What couldst thou ask for that I  
have not given?

With love I gave thee manly probity,

Innocence, honor, self-respect, and peace.

LANCIOTTO will return, and how shall I— 10

O! shame, to think of it!—how shall I look

My brother in the face? take his frank hand?

Return his tender glances? I should blaze

With guilty blushes.

FRANCESCA Thou canst forsake me, then,

To spare thyself a little bashful pain?

Paolo, dost thou know what 'tis for me,

A woman—nay, a dame of highest rank—

To lose my purity? to walk a path

Whose slightest slip may fill my ear with  
sounds

That hiss me out to infamy and death? 20

Have I no secret pangs, no self-respect,

No husband's look to bear? O! worse than  
these,

I must endure his loathsome touch, be kind

When he would dally with his wife, and smile

To see him play thy part. Pohl sickening  
thought!

From that thou art exempt Thou shalt not go!

Thou dost not love me!

PAOLO Love thee! Standing here,

With countless miseries upon my head,

I say, my love for thee grows day by day

It palter with my conscience, blurs my  
thoughts 30

Of duty, and confuses my ideas

Of right and wrong Ere long, it will persuade

My shaking manhood that all this is just.

FRANCESCA Let it! I'll blazon it to all the  
world,

Ere I will lose thee Nay, if I had choice,

Between our love and my lost innocence,

I tell thee calmly, I would dare again

The deed which we have done. O! thou art  
cruel

To fly me, like a coward, for thine ease.

When thou art gone, thou'lt flatter thy weak  
heart 40

With hopes and speculations; and thou'lt  
swear

I suffer naught, because thou dost not see.

I will not live to bear it!

PAOLO. Die,—'twere best;

'Tis the last desperate comfort of our sin.

FRANCESCA. I'll kill myself!

PAOLO. And so would I, with joy;  
But crime has made a craven of me. O!  
For some good cause to perish in! Something  
A man might die for, looking in God's face;  
Not slinking out of life with guilt like mine  
Piled on the shoulders of a suicide! 50

FRANCESCA. Where wilt thou go?

PAOLO I care not, anywhere  
Out of this Rimini. The very things  
That made the pleasures of my innocence  
Have turned against me. There is not a tree,  
Nor house, nor church, nor monument, whose  
face  
Took hold upon my thoughts, that does not  
frown

Balefully on me. From their marble tombs  
My ancestors scowl at me, and the night  
Thickens to hear their husses. I would pray,  
But heaven jeers at it. Turn where'er I will,  
A curse pursues me

FRANCESCA. Heavens! O, say not so!  
I never cursed thee, love, I never moved 62  
My little finger, ere I looked to thee  
For my instruction.

PAOLO But thy gentleness  
Seems to reproach me, and, instead of joy,  
It whispers horror!

FRANCESCA. Cease! cease!

PAOLO I must go  
FRANCESCA And I must follow. All that  
I call life

Is bound in thee. I could endure for thee  
More agonies than thou canst catalogue— 69  
For thy sake, love—bearing the ill for thee!  
With thee, the devils could not so contrive  
That I would blench or falter from my love!  
Without thee, heaven were torture!

PAOLO I must go. *[Going]*

FRANCESCA O! no,— Paolo—dearest!

*[Clinging to him]*

PAOLO Loose thy hold!  
'Tis for thy sake, and Lanciotto's, I  
Am as a cipher in the reckoning.  
I have resolved. Thou canst but stretch the  
time. 77

Keep me today, and I will fly tomorrow—  
Steal from thee like a thief.

*[Struggles with her.]*

FRANCESCA. Paolo—love—  
Indeed, you hurt me!—Do not use me thus!  
Kill me, but do not leave me. I will laugh—

A long, gay, ringing laugh—if thou wilt  
draw

Thy pitying sword, and stab me to the heart!

*[Enter LANCIOTTO behind.]*

Nay, then, one kiss!

LANCIOTTO *[advancing between them]*. Take  
it: 'twill be the last.

PAOLO Lo! Heaven is just!

FRANCESCA. The last! so be it.

*[Kisses PAOLO]*

LANCIOTTO. Hal

Dare you these tricks before my very face?

FRANCESCA. Why not? I've kissed him in  
the sight of Heaven,

Are you above it?

PAOLO Peace, Francesca, peace!

LANCIOTTO Paolo—why, thou sad and  
downcast man,

Look up! I have some words to speak with  
thee 90

Thou art not guilty?

PAOLO. Yes, I am. But she  
Has been betrayed, so she is innocent.  
Her father tampered with her. I—

FRANCESCA. 'Tis false!  
The guilt is mine. Paolo was entrapped  
By love and cunning. I am shrewder far  
Than you suspect

PAOLO. Lanciotto, shut thy ears;  
She would deceive thee.

LANCIOTTO Silence, both of you!  
Is guilt so talkative in its defense?

Then, let me make you judge and advocate  
In your own cause. You are not guilty?

PAOLO Yes.

LANCIOTTO. Deny it—but a word—say  
no. Lie, lie! 101

And I'll believe

PAOLO. I dare not.

LANCIOTTO. Lady, you?

FRANCESCA. If I might speak for him—

LANCIOTTO. It cannot be.

Speak for yourself. Do you deny your guilt?

FRANCESCA. No! I assert it, but—

LANCIOTTO. In heaven's name, hold!  
Will neither of you answer no to me?

A nod, a hint, a sign, for your escape.

Bethink you, life is centered in this thing.

Speak! I will credit either. No reply?

What does your crime deserve?

- PAOLO. Death.  
FRANCESCA. Death to both.  
LANCIOTTO. Well said! You speak the  
law of Italy; 111  
And by the dagger you designed for me,  
In Pepe's hand,—your bravo?  
PAOLO. It is false!  
If you received my dagger from his hand,  
He stole it.  
LANCIOTTO. There, sweet heaven, I knew!  
And now  
You will deny the rest? You see, my friends,  
How easy of belief I have become!—  
How easy 'twere to cheat me!  
PAOLO. No; enough!  
I will not load my groaning spirit more; 119  
A lie would crush it.  
LANCIOTTO. Brother, once you gave  
Life to this wretched piece of workmanship,  
When my own hand resolved its overthrow.  
Revoke the gift [Offers to stab himself]  
PAOLO [preventing him]. Hold, homicidel  
LANCIOTTO. But think,  
You and Francesca may live happily,  
After my death, as only lovers can.  
PAOLO. Live happily, after a deed like  
this!  
LANCIOTTO. Now, look yel there is not  
one hour of life  
Among us three Paolo, you are armed—  
You have a sword, I but a dagger. see!  
I mean to kill you  
FRANCESCA [whispers PAOLO]. Give thy  
sword to me. 130  
PAOLO. Away! thou'rt frantic! I will never  
lift  
This wicked hand against thee  
LANCIOTTO. Coward, slave!  
Art thou so faint? Does Malatesta's blood  
Run in thy puny veins? Take that!  
[Strikes him.]  
PAOLO. And more.  
Thou canst not offer more than I will bear.  
LANCIOTTO. Paolo, what a craven has thy  
guilt  
Transformed thee to! Why, I have seen the  
time  
When thou'dst have struck at heaven for such  
a thing!  
Art thou afraid?  
PAOLO. I am.
- LANCIOTTO. O! infamy!  
Can man sink lower? I will wake thee,  
though:— 140  
Thou shalt not die a coward. See! look here!  
[Stabs FRANCESCA.]  
FRANCESCA. O!—O!— [Falls.]  
PAOLO. Remorseless man,  
dare you do this,  
And hope to live? Die, murderer!  
[Draws, rushes at him, but pauses.]  
LANCIOTTO. Strike, strike!  
Ere thy heart fail  
PAOLO. I cannot  
[Throws away his sword.]  
LANCIOTTO. Dost thou see  
Yon bloated spider—hideous as myself—  
Climbing aloft, to reach that wavering twig?  
When he has touched it, one of us must  
die.  
Here is the dagger—Look at me, I say!  
Keep your eyes from that woman! Look, think,  
choose!— 149  
Turn here to me thou shalt not look at her!  
PAOLO. O, heaven!  
LANCIOTTO. 'Tis done!  
PAOLO [struggling with him]. O! Lanciotto,  
hold!  
Hold, for thy sake Thou wilt repent this deed.  
LANCIOTTO. I know it  
FRANCESCA [rising]. Help!—O! murder!—  
help, help, help!  
[She totters towards them, and falls.]  
LANCIOTTO. Our honor, boy!  
[Stabs PAOLO, he falls.]  
FRANCESCA. Paolo!  
PAOLO. Hark! she calls  
I pray thee, brother, help me to her side  
[LANCIOTTO helps him to FRANCESCA.]  
LANCIOTTO. Why, there!  
PAOLO. God bless thee!  
LANCIOTTO. Have I not done well?  
What were the honor of the Malatesta,  
With such a living slander fixed to it?  
Cripple! that's something—cuckold! that is  
damned! 159  
You blame me?  
PAOLO. No.  
LANCIOTTO. You, lady?  
FRANCESCA. No, my lord.  
LANCIOTTO. May God forgive you! We  
are even now:

Your blood has cleared my honor, and our  
name

Shines to the world as ever.

PAOLO. O!—O!—

FRANCESCA. Love,

Art suffering?

PAOLO. But for thee.

FRANCESCA Here, rest thy head  
Upon my bosom. Fie upon my blood!

It stains thy ringlets. Hal he deal Kind saints,  
I was first struck, why cannot I die first?

Paolo, waken!—God's mercy! wilt thou go  
Alone—without me? Prithce, strike again!

Nay, I am better—love—now—O! [*Dies*]

LANCIOTTO [*sinks upon his knees*] Great  
heaven! 170

MALATESTA [*without*] This way, I heard  
the cries.

[*Enter with GUIDO, and Attendants*]

GUIDO. O! horrible!

MALATESTA O! bloody spectacle! Where  
is thy brother?

LANCIOTTO. So Cain was asked. Come  
here, old men! You shrink

From two dead bodies and a pool of blood—  
You soldiers, too! Come here!

[*Drags MALATESTA and GUIDO forward*]

MALATESTA O!—O!—

LANCIOTTO. You groan!

What must I do, then? Father, here it is,—  
The blood of Guido mingled with our own,  
As my old nurse predicted. And the spot  
Of her infernal baptism burns my brain  
Till reason shudders! Down, upon your knees!

Ay, shake them harder, and perchance they'll  
wake. 181

Keep still! Kneel, kneel! You fear them? I  
shall prowl

About these bodies till the day of doom.

MALATESTA. What hast thou done?

GUIDO. Francesca!—O! my child!

LANCIOTTO. Can howling make this sight  
more terrible?

Peace! You disturb the angels up in heaven,

While they are hiding from this ugly earth.

Be satisfied with what you see. You two  
Began this tragedy, I finished it.

Here, by these bodies, let us reckon up 190

Our crimes together. Why, how still they lie!  
A moment since, they walked, and talked, and  
kissed!

Defied me to my face, dishonored me!

They had the power to do it then, but now,

Poor souls, who'll shield them in eternity?

Father, the honor of our house is safe—

I have the secret I will to the wars,

And do more murders, to eclipse this one.

Back to the battles, there I breathe in peace;

And I will take a soldier's honor back —

Honor! what's that to me now? Hal hal hal

[*Laughing*]

A great thing, father! I am very ill 202

I killed thy son for honor thou mayst chide

O God! I cannot cheat myself with words!

I loved him more than honor—more than  
life—

Thus man, Paolo—thus stark, bleeding corpse!

Here let me rest, till God awake us all

[*Falls on PAOLO's body*]

1853

1856

## The Romantic Historians

THE WORK of several of the main writers of the middle period of American history belongs not only to history proper but to literature also. Prescott, Motley, Parkman were all Harvard graduates who had leisure, wealth, scholarly preparation, and opportunity, though Prescott and Parkman wrote under very severe physical handicaps. The historian Gibbon preceded them and Macaulay and Carlyle were their contemporaries. Their conception of history was strongly



influenced by the historical fiction of Sir Walter Scott. They wrote romantically, wishing their work to give pleasure, like the Waverley novels, as well as to inform. Primarily narrators, they selected their subjects with care, looking for some grand event or series of events that contained the elements of historical drama and moved toward a climax. They dwelt on thrilling scenes and adventurous personalities. They wrote too early to be much concerned with social, constitutional, and economic problems; they gave little emphasis to forces underlying events, and even in volumes dealing with the Indians, they presented few anthropological details. They addressed all readers, not merely students of history. Breadth of conception, imagination, fact, and thought combine in their accounts. Because of their qualities of style, their dramatic intensity, and often their eloquence, they are still read by both amateurs and professionals in their fields. Since their day there have been changes in ideals of presentation and manner of writing; but later American historians are not usually taken into account, as are the Cambridge group, in literary surveys.

1796 -- *William Hickling Prescott* -- 1859

WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT, historian of Mexico and Peru, was born in Salem, Massachusetts, May 14, 1796. His father was a judge, his family prominent and well-to-do. He entered Harvard as a sophomore and was graduated in 1814. In his junior year the sight of one eye was destroyed in an accident, and the other was later attacked so that he could use it only at short periods in a darkened study. In 1815 he went to Europe, where he traveled until 1817. Upon his return to America he determined on a career as a historical writer and in 1821 began to contribute review articles to the *North American Review*. These proved him a critic of sound judgment. Fortunately he inherited wealth and could work even though he was practically blind, employing secretaries and experts, and having materials read aloud to him. His ambition was to follow Irving into Spanish history, a field which the older writer renounced to him. The *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, in three volumes (1843), and the *History of the Conquest of Peru*, in two volumes (1847), his greatest works, have stood the test of time well and remain standard in their field. Prescott had never been in Spain, Mexico, or Peru, but he makes real and vivid the scenes, events, and heroic adventures dealt with in his volumes. His style is finished, scholarly, and readable. His work has now been somewhat modified or supplemented from New World documentary and archaeological sources that were not available in his day.

Prescott's ideals as a historian appear in his review of Irving's *Conquest of Granada*.

The perfect historian, he says, "must be strictly impartial; a lover of truth under all circumstances, and ready to declare it at all hazards: he must be deeply conversant with whatever may bring into relief the character of the people he is depicting, not merely with their laws, constitution, general resources, and all the other more visible parts of the machinery of government, but with the nicer moral and social relations, the informing spirit which gives life to the whole, but escapes the eye of a vulgar observer. If he has to do with other ages and nations, he must expatriate himself, as it were, from his own, in order to get the very form and pressure of the times he is delineating. He must be conscientious in his attention to geography, chronology, etc., an inaccuracy in which has been fatal to more than one good philosophical history; and mixed up with all these drier details, he must display the various powers of a novelist or dramatist, throwing his characters into suitable lights and shades, disposing his scenes so as to awaken and maintain an unflagging interest, and diffusing over the whole that finished style, without which his work will only become a magazine of materials for the more elegant edifices of subsequent writers."

The definitive edition of the works of Prescott is the *Montezuma*, edited by W. H. Munro (22 vols., 1904). The *Correspondence of W. H. Prescott, 1823-1847* was edited by his grandson, Roger Wolcott (1925). This may be supplemented by *Unpublished Letters to Gayangos in the Library of the Hispanic Society of America*, edited by Clara L. Penney (1927). George Ticknor's *The Life of W. H. Prescott* (1864) is still standard. Other biographies are by Rollo Ogden, in the American Men of Letters Series (1904), and by H. T. Peck, in the English Men of Letters Series (1905). R. B. Merriman wrote of Prescott in *DAB*, XV (1935), and Ruth Putnam in *CHAL*, II (1918). Other references are E. P. Whipple, in *Essays and Reviews*, I (1848-9); M. A. DeW. Howe, in *American Bookmen* (1898), Theodore Parker, in *The American Scholar* (1907), Édouard Fueter, in *Histoire de l'Historiographie Moderne* (1914), Allan Nevins, in *Macy's American Writers on American Literature* (1931). For Prescott as a historian, see especially J. S. Bassett's *The Middle Group of American Historians* (1917).

### From THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

Preceding chapters deal with a view of Aztec civilization, the discovery of Mexico, the beginning of the march to Mexico City, the seat of Montezuma, the so-called Emperor of Mexico, and the entrance of the Spaniards into the republic of Tlascala and into Cholula. Later chapters tell of the resumption of the march to Mexico City, the stay of the Spaniards there, their expulsion, the final siege and surrender of Mexico City, and the subsequent career of Cortés.

### Preface

HAVING thus stated the nature of my materials, and the sources whence they are derived,

it remains for me to add a few observations on the general plan and composition of the work. — Among the remarkable achievements of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century there is no one more striking to the imagination than the conquest of Mexico. The subversion of a great empire by a handful of adventurers, taken with all its strange and picturesque accompaniments, has the air of romance rather than of sober history, and it is not easy to treat such a theme according to the severe rules prescribed by historical criticism. But, notwithstanding the seductions of the subject, I have conscientiously endeavored to distinguish fact from fiction, and to establish the narrative on as broad a basis as possible of

contemporary evidence; and I have taken occasion to corroborate the text by ample citations from authorities, usually in the original, since few of them can be very accessible to the reader. In these extracts I have scrupulously conformed to the ancient orthography, however obsolete and even barbarous, rather than impair in any degree the integrity of the original document.

The distance of the present age from the period of the narrative might be presumed to secure the historian from undue prejudice or partiality. Yet to the American and the English reader, acknowledging so different a moral standard from that of the sixteenth century, I may possibly be thought too indulgent to the errors of the Conquerors, while to a Spaniard, accustomed to the undiluted panegyric of Solís,<sup>1</sup> I may be deemed to have dealt too hardly with them. To such I can only say, that, while, on the one hand, I have not hesitated to expose in their strongest colours the excesses of the Conquerors, on the other, I have given them the benefit of such mitigating reflections as might be suggested by the circumstances and the period in which they lived. I have endeavored not only to present a picture true in itself, but to place it in its proper light, and to put the spectator in a proper point of view for seeing it to the best advantage. I have endeavored, at the expense of some repetition, to surround him with the spirit of the times, and, in a word, to make him, if I may so express myself, a contemporary of the sixteenth century. Whether, and how far, I have succeeded in this, he must determine.

#### BOOK III CHAPTER VI

#### [Cortés in Cholula, 1519]

The ancient city of Cholula,<sup>2</sup> capital of the republic of that name, lay nearly six leagues south of Tlascala,<sup>3</sup> and about twenty east, or rather south-east of Mexico. It was said by

<sup>1</sup> Antonio de Solís y Ribadeneyra, 1610-1686, author of *Historia de la conquista de México*, 1st ed., 1864. [Prescott's note.] <sup>2</sup> near the present city of Puebla.

<sup>3</sup> Capital of a small republic of that name. Six thousand Tlascalans had joined Cortés as allies in his march against their enemies, the Cholulans.

Cortés to contain twenty thousand houses within the walls, and as many more in the environs, though now dwindled to a population of less than sixteen thousand souls. Whatever was its real number of inhabitants, it was unquestionably, at the time of the Conquest, one of the most populous and flourishing cities in New Spain.

It was of great antiquity, and was founded by the primitive races who overspread the land before the Aztecs. We have few particulars of its form of government, which seems to have been cast on a republican model similar to that of Tlascala. This answered so well, that the state maintained its independence down to a very late period, when, if not reduced to vassalage by the Aztecs, it was so far under their control as to enjoy few of the benefits of a separate political existence. Their connection with Mexico brought the Cholulans into frequent collision with their neighbors and kinsred, the Tlascalans. But, although far superior to them in refinement and the various arts of civilization, they were no match in war for the bold mountaineers, the Swiss of Anahuac.<sup>1</sup> The Cholulan capital was the great commercial emporium of the plateau. The inhabitants excelled in various mechanical arts, especially that of working in metals, the manufacture of cotton and agave cloths, and of a delicate kind of pottery, rivaling, it was said, that of Florence in beauty. But such attention to the arts of a polished and peaceful community naturally indisposed them to war, and disqualified them for coping with those who made war the great business of life. The Cholulans were accused of effeminacy, and were less distinguished—it is the charge of their rivals—by their courage than their cunning.

But the capital, so conspicuous for its refinement and its great antiquity, was even more venerable for the religious traditions which invested it. It was here that the god Quetzalcoatl<sup>2</sup> paused in his passage to the coast, and passed twenty years in teaching the Toltec inhabitants the arts of civilization. He

<sup>1</sup> part of the central tableland near Mexico City.

<sup>2</sup> A white god of tradition, originally a culture hero of the Toltecs. The Toltecs preceded the Aztecs and are supposed to have handed on to the latter their culture.

made them acquainted with better forms of government, and a more spiritualized religion, in which the only sacrifices were the fruits and flowers of the season. It is not easy to determine what he taught, since his lessons have been so mingled with the licentious dogmas of his own priests, and the mystic commentaries of the Christian missionary. It is probable that he was one of those rare and gifted beings, who, dissipating the darkness of the age by the illumination of their own genius, are deified by a grateful posterity, and placed among the lights of heaven.

It was in honor of this benevolent deity, that the stupendous mound was erected on which the traveller still gazes with admiration as the most colossal fabric in New Spain, rivalling in dimensions, and somewhat resembling in form, the pyramidal structures of ancient Egypt. The date of its erection is unknown, for it was found there when the Aztecs entered on the plateau. It had the form common to the Mexican *teocallis*,<sup>1</sup> that of a truncated pyramid, facing with its four sides the cardinal points, and divided into the same number of terraces. Its original outlines, however, have been effaced by the action of time and of the elements, while the exuberant growth of shrubs and wild flowers, which have mantled over its surface, give it the appearance of one of those symmetrical elevations thrown up by the caprice of nature, rather than by the industry of man. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the interior be not a natural hill, though it seems not improbable that it is an artificial composition of stone and earth, deeply incrustated, as is certain, in every part, with alternate strata of brick and clay.

The perpendicular height of the pyramid is one hundred and seventy-seven feet. Its base is one thousand four hundred and twenty-three feet long, twice as long as that of the great pyramid of Cheops. It may give some idea of its dimensions to state, that its base, which is square, covers about forty-four acres, and the platform on its truncated summit, embraces more than one. It reminds us of those colossal monuments of brickwork, which are still seen in ruins on the banks of the

Euphrates, and, in much higher preservation, on those of the Nile.

On the summit stood a sumptuous temple, in which was the image of the mystic deity, "god of the air," with ebony features, unlike the fair complexion which he bore upon earth, wearing a mitre on his head waving with *plumes of fire*, with a resplendent collar of gold round his neck, pendants of mosaic turquoise in his ears, a jewelled scepter in one hand, and a shield curiously painted, the emblem of his rule over the winds, in the other. The sanctity of the place, hallowed by hoary tradition, and the magnificence of the temple and its services, made it an object of veneration throughout the land, and pilgrims from the furthest corners of Anahuac came to offer up their devotions at the shrine of Quetzalcoatl. The number of these was so great, as to give an air of mendicancy<sup>1</sup> to the motley population of the city, and Cortés, struck with the novelty, tells us that he saw multitudes of beggars such as are to be found in the enlightened capitals of Europe,—a whimsical criterion of civilization which must place our own prosperous land somewhat low in the scale.

Cholula was not the resort only of the indigent devotee. Many of the kindred races had temples of their own in the city, in the same manner as some Christian nations have in Rome, and each temple was provided with its own peculiar ministers for the service of the deity to whom it was consecrated. In no city was there seen such a concourse of priests, so many processions, such pomp of ceremonial sacrifice, and religious festivals. Cholula was, in short, what Mecca is among Mahometans, or Jerusalem among Christians, it was the Holy City of Anahuac.

The religious rites were not performed, however, in the pure spirit originally prescribed by its tutelary deity. His altars, as well as those of the numerous Aztec gods, were stained with human blood, and six thousand victims are said to have been annually offered up at their sanguinary shrines. The great number of these may be estimated from the declaration of Cortés, that he counted four hundred towers in the city, yet no temple had

<sup>1</sup> temples or mounds built for public services

<sup>1</sup> mendicancy

more than two, many only one. High above the rest rose the great "pyramid of Cholula," with its undying fires flinging their radiance far and wide over the capital, and proclaiming to the nations that there was the mystic worship—alas!—how corrupted by cruelty and superstition—of the good deity who was one day to return and resume his empire over the land

Nothing could be more grand than the view which met the eye from the area on the truncated summit of the pyramid. Toward the north stretched that bold barrier of porphyritic rock which nature has reared round the Valley of Mexico, with the huge Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl standing like two colossal sentinels to guard the entrance to the enchanted region. Far away to the south was seen the conical head of Orizaba soaring high into the clouds, and nearer, the barren, though beautifully shaped Sierra de Malinche, throwing its broad shadows over the plains of Tlascala. Three of these are volcanoes, higher than the highest mountain-peak in Europe, and shrouded in snows which never melt under the fierce sun of the tropics. At the foot of the spectator lay the sacred city of Cholula, with its bright towers and pinnacles sparkling in the sun, reposing amidst gardens and verdant groves, which then thickly studded the cultivated environs of the capital. Such was the magnificent prospect which met the gaze of the conquerors, and may still, with slight change, meet that of the modern traveller, as from the platform of the great pyramid his eye wanders over the fairest portion of the beautiful plateau of Puebla

But it is time to return to Tlascala. On the appointed morning the Spanish army took up its march to Mexico by the way of Cholula. It was followed by crowds of the citizens, filled with admiration at the intrepidity of men who, so few in number, would venture to brave the great Montezuma in his capital. Yet an immense body of warriors offered to share the dangers of the expedition, but Cortés, while he showed his gratitude for their goodwill, selected only six thousand of the volunteers to bear him company. He was unwilling to encumber himself with an unwieldy force that might impede his movements, and prob-

ably did not care to put himself so far in the power of allies whose attachment was too recent to afford sufficient guaranty for their fidelity.

After crossing some rough and hilly ground, the army entered on the wide plain which spreads out for miles around Cholula. At the elevation of more than six thousand feet above the sea they beheld the rich products of various climes growing side by side, fields of towering maize, the juicy aloe, the chili or Aztec pepper, and large plantations of the cactus, on which the brilliant cochineal is nourished. Not a rood of land but was under cultivation, and the soil—a common thing on the tableland—was irrigated by numerous streams and canals, and well shaded by woods, that have disappeared before the rude axe of the Spaniards. Towards evening they reached a small stream, on the banks of which Cortés determined to take up his quarters for the night, being unwilling to disturb the tranquillity of the city by introducing so large a force into it at an unseasonable hour.

Here he was soon joined by a number of Cholulan caciques<sup>1</sup> and their attendants, who came to view and welcome the strangers. When they saw their Tlascalan enemies in the camp, however, they exhibited signs of displeasure, and intimated an apprehension that their presence in the town might occasion disorder. The remonstrance seemed reasonable to Cortés, and he accordingly commanded his allies to remain in their present quarters, and to join him as he left the city on the way to Mexico.

On the following morning he made his entrance at the head of his army into Cholula, attended by no other Indians than those from Cempoalla,<sup>2</sup> and a handful of Tlascalans to take charge of the baggage. His allies, at parting, gave him many cautions respecting the people he was to visit, who, while they affected to despise them as a nation of traders, employed the dangerous arms of perfidy and cunning. As the troops drew near the city, the road was lined with swarms of people of both sexes and every age,—old men tottering with infirmity, women with children in their

<sup>1</sup> native chiefs  
<sup>2</sup> ancient town near the present site of Vera Cruz

arms, all eager to catch a glimpse of the strangers, whose persons, weapons, and horses were objects of intense curiosity to eyes which had not hitherto ever encountered them in battle. The Spaniards, in turn, were filled with admiration at the aspect of the Cholulans, much superior in dress and general appearance to the nations they had hitherto seen. They were particularly struck with the costume of the higher classes, who wore fine embroidered mantles, resembling the graceful *albornoz*, or Moorish cloak, in their texture and fashion. They showed the same delicate taste for flowers as the other tribes of the plateau, decorating their persons with them, and tossing garlands and bunches among the soldiers. An immense number of priests mingled with the crowd, swinging their aromatic censers, while music from various kinds of instruments gave a lively welcome to the visitors, and made the whole scene one of gay, bewildering enchantment. If it did not have the air of a triumphal procession so much as at Tlascala, where the melody of instruments was drowned by the shouts of the multitude, it gave a quiet assurance of hospitality and friendly feeling not less grateful.

The Spaniards were also struck with the cleanliness of the city, the width and great regularity of the streets, which seemed to have been laid out on a settled plan, with the solidity of the houses, and the number and size of the pyramidal temples. In the court of one of these, and its surrounding buildings, they were quartered.

They were soon visited by the principal lords of the place, who seemed solicitous to provide them with accommodations. Their table was plentifully supplied, and, in short, they experienced such attentions as were calculated to dissipate their suspicions, and made them impute those of their Tlascalcan friends to prejudice and old national hostility.

In a few days the scene changed. Messengers arrived from Montezuma, who, after a short and unpleasant intimation to Cortés that his approach occasioned much disquietude to their master, conferred separately with the Mexican ambassadors still in the Castilian camp, and then departed, taking one of the latter along with them. From this time, the deportment

of their Cholulan hosts underwent a visible alteration. They did not visit the quarters as before, and, when invited to do so, excused themselves on pretence of illness. The supply of provisions was stinted, on the ground that they were short of maize. These symptoms of alienation, independently of temporary embarrassment, caused serious alarm in the breast of Cortés, for the future. His apprehensions were not allayed by the reports of the Cempoallans, who told him, that in wandering round the city they had seen several streets barricaded, the *azoteas*, or flat roofs of the houses, loaded with huge stones and other missiles, as if preparatory to an assault; and in some places they had found holes covered over with branches, and upright stakes planted within, as if to embarrass the movements of the cavalry. Some Tlascalans coming in also from their camp, informed the general that a great sacrifice, mostly of children, had been offered up in a distant quarter of the town, to propitiate the favor of the gods, apparently for some intended enterprise. They added, that they had seen numbers of the citizens leaving the city with their women and children, as if to remove them to a place of safety. These tidings confirmed the worst suspicions of Cortés, who had no doubt that some hostile scheme was in agitation. If he had felt any, a discovery by Marina, the good angel of the expedition, would have turned these doubts into certainty.

The amiable manners of the Indian girl had won her the regard of the wife of one of the caciques, who repeatedly urged Marina to visit her house, darkly intimating that in this way she would escape the fate that awaited the Spaniards. The interpreter, seeing the importance of obtaining further intelligence at once pretended to be pleased with the proposal, and affected, at the same time, great discontent with the white men, by whom she was detained in captivity. Thus throwing the credulous Cholulan off her guard, Marina gradually insinuated herself into her confidence, so far as to draw from her a full account of the conspiracy.

It originated, she said, with the Aztec emperor, who had sent rich bribes to the great caciques, and to her husband among others,

to secure them in his views. The Spaniards were to be assaulted as they marched out of the capital, when entangled in its streets, in which numerous impediments had been placed to throw the cavalry into disorder. A force of twenty thousand Mexicans was already quartered at no great distance from the city, to support the Cholulans in the assault. It was confidently expected that the Spaniards, thus embarrassed in their movements, would fall 10 an easy prey to the superior strength of their enemy. A sufficient number of prisoners was to be reserved to grace the sacrifices of Cholula, the rest were to be led in fetters to the capital of Montezuma.

While this conversation was going on, Marina occupied herself with putting up such articles of value and wearing apparel as she proposed to take with her in the evening, when she could escape unnoticed from the Spanish quarters to the house of her Cholulan friend, who assisted her in the operation. Leaving her visitor thus employed, Marina found an opportunity to steal away for a few moments, and, going to the general's apartment, disclosed to him her discoveries. He immediately caused the cacique's wife to be seized, and on examination she fully confirmed the statement of his Indian mistress.

The intelligence thus gathered by Cortés 30 filled him with the deepest alarm. He was fairly taken in the snare. To fight or to fly seemed equally difficult. He was in a city of enemies, where every house might be converted into a fortress, and where such embarrassments were thrown in the way as might render the manoeuvres of his artillery and horse nearly impracticable. In addition to the wily Cholulans, he must cope, under all these disadvantages, with the redoubtable warriors 40 of Mexico. He was like a traveller who has lost his way in the darkness among precipices, where any step may dash him to pieces, and where to retreat or to advance is equally perilous.

He was desirous to obtain still further confirmation and particulars of the conspiracy. He accordingly induced two of the priests in the neighborhood, one of them a person of much influence in the place, to visit his quarters. By courteous treatment, and liberal

largesses of the rich presents he had received from Montezuma,—thus turning his own gifts against the giver,—he drew from them a full confirmation of the previous report. The emperor had been in a state of pitiable vacillation since the arrival of the Spaniards. His first orders to the Cholulans were to receive the strangers kindly. He had recently consulted his oracles anew, and obtained for answer that 10 Cholula would be the grave of his enemies; for the gods would be sure to support him in avenging the sacrilege offered to the Holy City. So confident were the Aztecs of success that numerous manacles, or poles with thongs which served as such, were already in the place to secure the prisoners.

Cortés, now feeling himself fully possessed of the facts, dismissed the priests with injunctions of secrecy scarcely necessary. He told them it was his purpose to leave the city on the following morning, and requested that they would induce some of the principal caciques to grant him an interview in his quarters. He then summoned a council of his officers, though, as it seems, already determined as to the course he was to take.

The members of the council were differently affected by the startling intelligence, according to their different characters. The more timid, disheartened by the prospect of obstacles which seemed to multiply as they drew nearer the Mexican capital, were for retracing their steps, and seeking shelter in the friendly city of Tlascala. Others, more persevering, but prudent, were for taking the more northerly route originally recommended by their allies. The greater part supported the general, who was ever of opinion that they had no alternative but to advance. Retreat would be ruin. Half-way measures were scarcely better, and would infer a timidity which must discredit them with both friend and foe. Their true policy was to rely on themselves, to strike such a blow as should intimidate their enemies, and show them that the Spaniards were as incapable of being circumvented by artifice, as of being crushed by weight of numbers and courage in the open field.

When the caciques, persuaded by the priests, appeared before Cortés, he contented himself with gently rebuking their want of hospitality,

and assured them the Spaniards would be no longer a burden to their city, as he proposed to leave it early on the following morning. He requested, moreover, that they would furnish a reinforcement of two thousand men to transport his artillery and baggage. The chiefs, after some consultation, acquiesced in a demand which might in some measure favor their own designs.

On their departure, the general summoned the Aztec ambassadors before him. He briefly acquainted them with his detection of the treacherous plot to destroy his army, the contrivance of which, he said, was imputed to their master, Montezuma. It grieved him much, he added, to find the emperor implicated in so nefarious a scheme, and that the Spaniards must now march as enemies against the prince, whom they had hoped to visit as a friend.

The ambassadors, with earnest protestations, asserted their entire ignorance of the conspiracy, and their belief that Montezuma was equally innocent of a crime, which they charged wholly on the Cholulans. It was clearly the policy of Cortés to keep on good terms with the Indian monarch, to profit as long as possible by his good offices, and to avail himself of his fancied security—such feelings of security as the general could inspire him with—to cover his own future operations. He affected to give credit, therefore, to the assertion of the envoys, and declared his unwillingness to believe that a monarch, who had rendered the Spaniards so many friendly

offices, would now consummate the whole by a deed of such unparalleled baseness. The discovery of their twofold duplicity, he added, sharpened his resentment against the Cholulans, on whom he would take such vengeance as should amply requite the injuries done both to Montezuma and the Spaniards. He then dismissed the ambassadors, taking care, notwithstanding this show of confidence, to place a strong guard over them to prevent communication with the citizens.

That night was one of deep anxiety to the army. The ground they stood on seemed loosening beneath their feet, and any moment might be the one marked for their destruction. Their vigilant general took all possible precautions for their safety, increasing the number of the sentinels, and posting his guns in such a manner as to protect the approaches to the camp. His eyes, it may well be believed, did not close during the night. Indeed every Spaniard lay down in his arms, and every horse stood saddled and bridled, ready for instant service. But no assault was meditated by the Indians, and the stillness of the hour was undisturbed except by the occasional sounds heard in a populous city, even when buried in slumber, and by the hoarse cries of the priests from the turrets of the *teocallis*, proclaiming through their trumpets the watches of the night.<sup>1</sup>

1845

<sup>1</sup> Cortés retaliated on the Cholulans for their conspiracy by massacring many of them, after which he resumed his march on Mexico City.

## 1814 -- John Lothrop Motley -- 1877

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, historian, novelist, and diplomatist, was born on April 15, 1814, at Dorchester, Massachusetts, a descendant of a long line of New England ancestry. He grew up in an atmosphere of ease and culture. He received his early education at private schools and was graduated in 1831 from Harvard, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Following his graduation, he studied in Germany at Berlin and Göttingen. From 1834 to 1835 he traveled. Upon his return to America, he married and settled near Boston to practice law. As a boy,



Motley was a great reader and a ready writer and speaker. He was especially interested in Cooper and Scott, and early tried to create a historical romance of his own. He was the author of two novels, *Morton's Hope*, published in 1839, and *Merrymount*, which appeared in 1849.

In 1841 Motley was made Secretary of the American Legation at St. Petersburg (now Leningrad), but he resigned the post after a short time. He cared greatly for history, and Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, which had recently appeared, stimulated this interest. At thirty-six, he resolved to begin his lifework as a historian. For the subject of his first effort he selected the Spanish wars in the Netherlands. In 1851 he took his family with him to Europe in order to do research in the European archives. For two years he worked in Dresden, and later continued his work in Holland and Belgium. The first edition of *The History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic* was printed in 1856, at his own expense. Next came *The History of the United Netherlands* in 1860-67, and finally *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld* in 1874.

Motley was appointed by President Lincoln as minister to Austria in 1861. He served until 1867, when he resigned under President Johnson. In 1869 he was appointed minister to England, but was recalled the following year, the victim of party politics. His prepossessing presence, tact, wealth, and intellectual gifts should have made him an ideal diplomat, but his experiences were trying and disillusioning. He died in England in 1877.

As Dr. B. T. Schantz has shown, Motley was not only an intelligent literary critic (as his essays on Goethe and Balzac indicate) but he had clearly-defined theories about literary and historical art. Thinking that "Germany has been the main source of European and American culture," he adopted many of Goethe's principles, especially his anti-national cosmopolitanism. "He would not labor for temporary or local ends, but for all time; he would consecrate himself, not to the particular, the limited, and the one-sided, but to the universal and permanent." Motley also followed in many ways the two chief interpreters of German thought in England, Coleridge and Carlyle. Like the first, he exalted the unifying imagination controlled by reason and the universality and balance of true genius. Like the second, he saw history as revolving about the personality of a superman or "hero" and he delighted in presenting the actors, scenes, and events of history in a manner dramatic and pictorial. He quotes with approval Carlyle's dictum that "To seize a character, even that of one man, in its life and secret mechanism, requires a philosopher; to delineate it is the work of a poet." Motley thought that style "above all other qualities seems to embalm for posterity," and he set as his ideal style the combination of "the flowing, the ornate, the fanciful, with the accurate, the condensed, the aphoristical." He held that "a work of art . . . must, if it is true to the principles of aesthetics, exert an ennobling and refining influence. Convinced that the growth

of democratic freedom of thought illustrates the law of progress (on which he wrote an essay), Motley justified his broad didacticism and partisanship in his history of the conflict between the Catholic absolutism of Spain and the Protestant liberalism of the Netherlands: "To discover the great intellectual law prescribed by the Creator is the science of history."

A collected edition, *The Writings of John Lothrop Motley* (17 vols.) was published in 1900. Motley's *Correspondence* (2 vols., 1889) was edited by G. W. Curtiss. His daughter and Herbert St. John Mildmay edited *J. L. Motley Further Letters and Records* (1910). For selections, with a comprehensive introduction and bibliography, see *Motley*, edited by C. P. Higby and B. T. Schantz, in *American Writers Series* (1939). For additional study of Motley, consult O. W. Holmes, *J. L. Motley a Memoir* (1879), E. P. Whipple, in *Recollections of Eminent Men* (1887), and O. W. Long, in *Literary Pioneers* (1935). Ruth Putnam wrote of Motley in *CHAL*, II (1918), and E. P. Cheyney in *DAB*, XIII (1934). For Motley as a historian see J. S. Bassett, *The Middle Group of American Historians* (1917).

#### From THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

The Netherlands in the sixteenth century were subject to Charles V of Austria, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, and his son Philip II. Of Protestant faith, the Dutch were subjected to the terrors of the Spanish Inquisition by the Duke of Alva, the governor-general, until they rebelled in 1570, under the leadership of William the Silent, Prince of Orange. Count Louis of Nassau, brother of William, had caused the Spanish siege of Leyden in 1574 to be raised, for the time being, by a counter-attack from the French side. In April of that year he was killed at the battle of Mookerheyde.

#### PART IV CHAPTER II

#### [The Relief of Leyden]

THE invasion of Louis of Nassau had, as already stated, effected the raising of the first siege of Leyden. That leaguer had lasted from the 31st of October, 1573, to the 21st of March, 1574, when the soldiers were summoned away to defend the frontier. By an extraordinary and culpable carelessness, the citizens, neglecting the advice of the Prince, had not taken advantage of the breathing-time thus afforded them to victual the city and strengthen the garrison. They seemed to reckon more confidently upon the success of Count Louis than he had even done himself, for it was very probable that, in case of his defeat, the siege would be instantly resumed.

This natural result was not long in following the battle of Mookerheyde.

On the 26th of May, Valdez reappeared before the place at the head of eight thousand Walloons and Germans, and Leyden was now destined to pass through a fiery ordeal. This city was one of the most beautiful in the Netherlands. Placed in the midst of broad and fruitful pastures, which had been reclaimed by the hand of industry from the bottom of the sea, it was fringed with smiling villages, blooming gardens, fruitful orchards. The ancient and, at last, decrepit Rhine, flowing languidly towards its sandy death-bed, had been multiplied into innumerable artificial currents, by which the city was completely interlaced. These watery streets were shaded by lime trees, poplars, and willows, and crossed by one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone. The houses were elegant, the squares and streets spacious, airy, and clean, the churches and public edifices imposing, while the whole aspect of the place suggested thrift, industry, and comfort. Upon an artificial elevation in the center of the city rose a ruined tower of unknown antiquity. By some it was considered to be of Roman origin, while others preferred to regard it as a work of the Anglo-Saxon Hengist, raised to commemorate his conquest of England. Surrounded by fruit trees, and overgrown in the center with oaks, it afforded, from its moldering battlements, a charming prospect over a

wide expanse of level country, with the spires of neighboring cities rising in every direction. It was from this commanding height, during the long and terrible summer days which were approaching, that many an eye was to be strained anxiously seaward, watching if yet the ocean had begun to roll over the land.

Valdez lost no time in securing himself in the possession of Maeslandsdijk, Vlaardingen, and The Hague. Five hundred English, under command of Colonel Edward Chester, abandoned the fortress of Valkenburg, and fled towards Leyden. Refused admittance by the citizens, who now, with reason, distrusted them, they surrendered to Valdez, and were afterwards sent back to England. In the course of a few days Leyden was thoroughly invested, no less than sixty-two redoubts, some of them having remained undestroyed from the previous siege, now girdling the city, while the besiegers already numbered nearly eight thousand, a force to be daily increased. On the other hand, there were no troops in the town, save a small corps of "freebooters," and five companies of the burgher guard. John van der Does, Seigneur of Nordwyck, a gentleman of distinguished family, but still more distinguished for his learning, his poetical genius, and his valor, had accepted the office of military commandant.

The main reliance of the city, under God, was on the stout hearts of its inhabitants within the walls, and on the sleepless energy of William the Silent without. The Prince, hastening to comfort and encourage the citizens, although he had been justly irritated by their negligence in having omitted to provide more sufficiently against the emergency while there had yet been time, now reminded them that they were not about to contend for themselves alone, but that the fate of their country and of unborn generations would, in all human probability, depend on the issue about to be tried. Eternal glory would be their portion if they manifested a courage worthy of their race and of the sacred cause of religion and liberty. He implored them to hold out at least three months, assuring them that he would, within that time, devise the means of their deliverance. The citizens responded, courageously and confidently, to these mis-

sives, and assured the Prince of their firm confidence in their own fortitude and his exertions.

And truly they had a right to rely on that calm and unflinching soul as on a rock of adamant. All alone, without a being near him to consult, his right arm struck from him by the death of Louis, with no brother left to him but the untiring and faithful John,<sup>1</sup> he prepared without delay for the new task imposed upon him. France, since the defeat and death of Louis, and the busy intrigues which had followed the accession of Henry III, had but small sympathy for the Netherlands. The English government, relieved from the fear of France, was more cold and haughty than ever. An Englishman employed by Requesens<sup>2</sup> to assassinate the Prince of Orange, had been arrested in Zeeland, who impudently pretended that he had undertaken to perform the same office for Count John, with the full consent and privity of Queen Elizabeth. The provinces of Holland and Zeeland were stanch and true, but the inequality of the contest between a few brave men, upon that handbreadth of territory, and the powerful Spanish Empire, seemed to render the issue hopeless.

Moreover, it was now thought expedient to publish the amnesty which had been so long in preparation, and this time the trap was more liberally baited. The pardon, which had passed the seals upon the 8th of March, was formally issued by the Grand Commander on the 6th of June. By the terms of this document the king<sup>3</sup> invited all his erring and repentant subjects to return to his arms, and to accept a full forgiveness for their past offenses, upon the sole condition that they should once more throw themselves upon the bosom of the Mother Church. There were but few exceptions to the amnesty, a small number of individuals, all mentioned by name, being alone excluded, but although these terms were ample, the act was liable to a few stern objections. It was easier now for the Hollanders to go to their graves than to mass, for the contest, in its progress, had now entirely assumed the aspect of a religious war. Instead of a limited

<sup>1</sup> Count of Nassau    <sup>2</sup> the successor of the Duke of Alva as the Spanish governor-general of the Netherlands    <sup>3</sup> i. e., Philip II, the king of Spain

number of heretics in a state which, although constitutional, was Catholic, there was now hardly a Papist to be found among the natives. To accept the pardon then was to concede the victory, and the Hollanders had not yet discovered that they were conquered. They were resolved, too, not only to be conquered, but annihilated, before the Roman Church should be re-established on their soil, to the entire exclusion of the Reformed worship. They responded with steadfast enthusiasm to the sentiment expressed by the Prince of Orange, after the second siege of Leyden had been commenced: "As long as there is a living man left in the country, we will contend for our liberty and our religion." The single condition of the amnesty assumed, in a phrase, what Spain had fruitlessly striven to establish by a hundred battles, and the Hollanders had not faced their enemy on land and sea for seven years to succumb to a phrase at last

Moreover, the pardon came from the wrong direction. The malefactor gravely extended forgiveness to his victims. Although the Hollanders had not yet disembarassed their minds of the supernatural theory of government, and felt still the reverence of habit for regal divinity, they naturally considered themselves outraged by the trick now played before them. The man who had violated all his oaths, trampled upon all their constitutional liberties, burned and sacked their cities, confiscated their wealth, hanged, beheaded, burned, and buried alive their innocent brethren, now came forward, not to implore, but to offer forgiveness. Not in sackcloth, but in royal robes, not with ashes, but with a diadem upon his head, did the murderer present himself vicariously upon the scene of his crimes. It may be supposed that, even in the sixteenth century, there were many minds which would revolt at such blasphemy. Furthermore, even had the people of Holland been weak enough to accept the pardon, it was impossible to believe that the promise would be fulfilled. It was sufficiently known how much faith was likely to be kept with heretics, notwithstanding that the act was fortified by a papal bull, dated on the 30th of April, by which Gregory XIII promised forgiveness to those Netherland sinners who duly repented and sought absolution for their

crimes, even although they had sinned more than seven times seven.

For a moment the Prince had feared lest the pardon might produce some effect upon men wearied by interminable suffering, but the event proved him wrong. It was received with universal and absolute contempt. No man came forward to take advantage of its conditions, save one brewer in Utrecht and the son of a refugee peddler from Leyden. With these exceptions, the only ones recorded, Holland remained deaf to the royal voice. The city of Leyden was equally cold to the messages of mercy, which were especially addressed to its population by Valdez and his agents. Certain Netherlanders belonging to the King's party, and familiarly called "Glippers," despatched from the camp many letters to their rebellious acquaintances in the city. In these epistles the citizens of Leyden were urgently and even pathetically exhorted to submission by their loyal brethren, and were implored "to take pity upon their poor old fathers, their daughters, and their wives." But the burghers of Leyden thought that the best pity which they could show to those poor old fathers, daughters, and wives was to keep them from the clutches of the Spanish soldiery, so they made no answer to the Glippers, save by this single line, which they wrote on a sheet of paper, and forwarded, like a letter, to Valdez —

*Fistula dulce canit, volucrem cum decipit  
auceps*<sup>1</sup>

According to the advice early given by the Prince of Orange, the citizens had taken an account of their provisions of all kinds, including the live stock. By the end of June the city was placed on a strict allowance of food, all the provisions being purchased by the authorities at an equitable price. Half a pound of meat and half a pound of bread were allotted to a full-grown man, and to the rest a due proportion. The city being strictly invested, no communication, save by carrier pigeons, and by a few swift and skilful messengers, called jumpers, was possible. Sortes and fierce combats were, however, of daily

<sup>1</sup> "The pipe sounds sweetly while the fowler beguiles the bird" (from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*)

occurrence, and a handsome bounty was offered to any man who brought into the city gates the head of a Spaniard. The reward was paid many times, but the population was becoming so excited and so apt, that the authorities felt it dangerous to permit the continuance of these conflicts. Lest the city, little by little, should lose its few disciplined defenders, it was now proclaimed, by sound of church bell, that in future no man should leave the gates.

The Prince had his headquarters at Delft and at Rotterdam. Between those two cities an important fortress, called Polderwaert, secured him in the control of the alluvial quadrangle, watered on two sides by the Yssel and the Meuse. On the 19th June, the Spaniards, feeling its value, had made an unsuccessful effort to carry this fort by storm. They had been beaten off, with the loss of several hundred men, the Prince remaining in possession of the position, from which alone he could hope to relieve Leyden. He still held in his hand the keys with which he could unlock the ocean gates and let the waters in upon the land, and he had long been convinced that nothing could save the city but to break the dikes. Leyden was not upon the sea, but he could send the sea to Leyden, although an army fit to encounter the besieging force under Valdez could not be levied. The battle of Mookerheyde had, for the present, quite settled the question of land relief, but it was possible to besiege the besiegers with the waves of the ocean. The Spaniards occupied the coast from The Hague to Vlaardingen, but the dikes along the Meuse and Yssel were in possession of the Prince. He determined that these should be pierced, while, at the same time, the great sluices at Rotterdam, Schiedam, and Delfshaven should be opened. The damage to the fields, villages, and growing crops would be enormous, but he felt that no other course could rescue Leyden, and with it the whole of Holland, from destruction. His clear expositions and impassioned eloquence at last overcame all resistance. By the middle of July the estates fully consented to his plan, and its execution was immediately undertaken. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," cried the patriots, with enthusiasm, as they devoted their fertile fields to desolation. The enter-

prise for restoring their territory, for a season, to the waves, from which it had been so patiently rescued, was conducted with as much regularity as if it had been a profitable undertaking. A capital was formally subscribed, for which a certain number of bonds were issued, payable at a long date. In addition to this preliminary fund, a monthly allowance of forty-five guildens was voted by the estates, until the work should be completed, and a large sum was contributed by the ladies of the land, who freely furnished their plate, jewelry, and costly furniture to the furtherance of the scheme.

Meantime, Valdez, on the 30th July, issued most urgent and ample offers of pardon to the citizens, if they would consent to open their gates and accept the King's authority, but his overtures were received with silent contempt, notwithstanding that the population was already approaching the starvation point. Although not yet fully informed of the active measures taken by the Prince, yet they still chose to rely upon his energy and their own fortitude, rather than upon the homed words<sup>1</sup> which had formerly been heard at the gates of Haarlem and of Naarden. On the 3rd of August, the Prince, accompanied by Paul Buys, chief of the commission appointed to execute the enterprise, went in person along the Yssel as far as Kappelle, and superintended the rupture of the dikes in sixteen places. The gates at Schiedam and Rotterdam were opened, and the ocean began to pour over the land. While waiting for the waters to rise, provisions were rapidly collected, according to an edict of the Prince, in all the principal towns of the neighborhood, and some two hundred vessels, of various sizes, had also been got ready at Rotterdam, Delfshaven, and other ports.

The citizens of Leyden were, however, already becoming impatient, for their bread was gone, and of its substitute malt-cake, they had but slender provision. On the 12th of August they received a letter from the Prince, encouraging them to resistance, and assuring them of a speedy relief, and on the 21st they addressed a despatch to him in reply, stating that they had now fulfilled their original

<sup>1</sup> Pledges of safety on surrender had been disregarded on more than one occasion.

promise, for they had held out two months with food, and another month without food. If not soon assisted, human strength could do no more; their malt-cake would last but four days, and after that was gone, there was nothing left but starvation. Upon the same day, however, they received a letter, dictated by the Prince, who now lay in bed at Rotterdam with a violent fever, assuring them that the dikes were all pierced, and that the water was rising upon the "Land-scheiding," the great outer barrier which separated the city from the sea. He said nothing however of his own illness, which would have cast a deep shadow over the joy which now broke forth among the burghers.

The letter was read publicly in the marketplace, and to increase the cheerfulness, Burgomaster van der Werf, knowing the sensibility of his countrymen to music, ordered the city musicians to perambulate the streets, playing lively melodies and martial airs. Salvos of cannon were likewise fired, and the starving city for a brief space put on the aspect of a holiday, much to the astonishment of the besieging forces, who were not yet aware of the Prince's efforts. They perceived very soon, however, as the water everywhere about Leyden had risen to the depth of ten inches, that they stood in a perilous position. It was no trifling danger to be thus attacked by the waves of the ocean, which seemed about to obey with docility the command of William the Silent. Valdez became anxious and uncomfortable at the strange aspect of affairs, for the besieging army was now in its turn beleaguered, and by a stronger power than man's. He consulted with the most experienced of his officers, with the country people, with the most distinguished among the Glippers, and derived encouragement from their views concerning the Prince's plan. They pronounced it utterly futile and hopeless. The Glippers knew the country well, and ridiculed the desperate project in unmeasured terms.

Even in the city itself a dull distrust had succeeded to the first vivid gleam of hope, while the few royalists among the population boldly taunted their fellow-citizens to their faces with the absurd vision of relief which they had so fondly welcomed. "Go up to the

tower, ye beggars,"<sup>1</sup> was the frequent and taunting cry, "go up to the tower, and tell us if ye can see the ocean coming over the dry land to your relief"—and day after day they did go up to the ancient tower of Hengst, with heavy heart and anxious eye, watching, hoping, praying, fearing, and at last almost despairing of relief by God or man. On the 27th they addressed a desponding letter to the estates, complaining that the city had been forgotten in its utmost need, and on the same day a prompt and warm-hearted reply was received, in which the citizens were assured that every human effort was to be made for their relief. "Rather," said the estates, "will we see our whole land and all our possessions perish in the waves than forsake thee, Leyden. We know full well, moreover, that with Leyden all Holland must perish also." They excused themselves for not having more frequently written, upon the ground that the whole management of the measures for their relief had been intrusted to the Prince, by whom alone all the details had been administered and all the correspondence conducted.

The fever of the Prince had, meanwhile, reached its height. He lay at Rotterdam, utterly prostrate in body, and with mind agitated nearly to delirium by the perpetual and almost unassisted schemes which he was constructing. Relief, not only for Leyden, but for the whole country, now apparently sinking into the abyss, was the vision which he pursued as he tossed upon his restless couch. Never was illness more unseasonable. His attendants were in despair, for it was necessary that his mind should for a time be spared the agitation of business. The physicians who attended him agreed, as to his disorder, only in this, that it was the result of mental fatigue and melancholy, and could be cured only by removing all distressing and perplexing subjects from his thoughts, but all the physicians in the world could not have succeeded in turning his attention for an instant from the great cause of his country. Leyden lay, as it were, anxious and despairing at his feet, and it was impossible for him to close his ears to her cry. Therefore, from his sick bed he con-

<sup>1</sup> "Sea-beggars" and "water-beggars" were nicknames given to the patriots.

turned to dictate words of counsel and encouragement to the city; to Admiral Boisot, commanding the fleet, minute directions and precautions. Towards the end of August a vague report had found its way into his sick chamber that Leyden had fallen, and although he refused to credit the tale, yet it served to harass his mind, and to heighten fever. Cornelius van Mierop, Receiver-General of Holland, had occasion to visit him at Rotterdam, and strange to relate, found the house almost deserted. Penetrating, unattended, to the Prince's bedchamber, he found him lying quite alone. Inquiring what had become of all his attendants, he was answered by the Prince, in a very feeble voice, that he had sent them all away. The receiver-general seems, from this, to have rather hastily arrived at the conclusion that the Prince's disorder was the pest, and that his servants and friends had all deserted him from cowardice. This was very far from being the case. His private secretary and his *maitre d'hôtel* watched, day and night, by his couch, and the best physicians of the city were in constant attendance. By a singular accident, all had been despatched on different errands, at the express desire of their master, but there had never been a suspicion that his disorder was the pest, or pestilential. Nerves of steel and a frame of adamant could alone have resisted the constant anxiety and the consuming fangue to which he had so long been exposed. His illness had been aggravated by the rumor of Leyden's fall, a fiction which Cornelius Mierop was now enabled flatly to contradict. The Prince began to mend from that hour. By the end of the first week of September he wrote a long letter to his brother, assuring him of his convalescence, and expressing, as usual, a calm confidence in the divine decrees—"God will ordain for me," said he, "all which is necessary for my good and my salvation. He will load me with no more afflictions than the fragility of this nature can sustain."

The preparations for the relief of Leyden, which, notwithstanding his exertions, had grown slack during his sickness, were now vigorously resumed. On the 1st of September, Admiral Boisot arrived out of Zeeland with a small number of vessels and with eight

hundred veteran sailors. A wild and ferocious crew were those eight hundred Zeelanders. Scarred, hacked, and even maimed, in the unceasing conflicts in which their lives had passed; wearing crescents in their caps, with the inscription "Rather Turkish than Popish"; renowned far and wide, as much for their ferocity as for their nautical skill, the appearance of these wildest of the "Sea-beggars" was both eccentric and terrific. They were known never to give nor to take quarter, for they went to *mortal* combat only, and had sworn to spare neither noble nor simple, neither king, kaiser, nor pope, should they fall into their power.

More than two hundred vessels had been now assembled, carrying generally ten pieces of cannon, with from ten to eighteen oars, and manned with twenty-five hundred veterans, experienced both on land and water. The work was now undertaken in earnest. The distance from Leyden to the outer dike, over whose ruins the ocean had already been admitted, was nearly fifteen miles. This reclaimed territory, however, was not maintained against the sea by these external barriers alone. The flotilla made its way with ease to the Land-scheiding, a strong dike within five miles of Leyden, but here its progress was arrested. The approach to the city was surrounded by many strong ramparts, one within the other, by which it was defended against its ancient enemy, the ocean, precisely like the circumvallations by means of which it was now assailed by its more recent enemy, the Spaniard. To enable the fleet, however, to sail over the land, it was necessary to break through this twofold series of defenses. Between the Land-scheiding and Leyden were several dikes, which kept out the water, upon the level territory thus encircled were many villages, together with a chain of sixty-two forts, which completely occupied the land. All these villages and fortresses were held by the veteran troops of the king, the besieging force being about four times as strong as that which was coming to the rescue.

The Prince had given orders that the Land-scheiding, which was still one-and-a-half foot above water, should be taken possession of at

every hazard. On the night of the 10th and 11th of September this was accomplished by surprise, and in a masterly manner. The few Spaniards who had been stationed upon the dike were all despatched or driven off, and the patriots fortified themselves upon it without the loss of a man. As the day dawned the Spaniards saw the fatal error which they had committed in leaving this bulwark so feebly defended, and from two villages which stood close to the dike the troops now rushed in considerable force to recover what they had lost. A hot action succeeded, but the patriots had too securely established themselves. They completely defeated the enemy, who retired, leaving hundreds of dead on the field, and the patriots in complete possession of the Land-scheiding. This first action was sanguinary and desperate. It gave an earnest of what these people, who came to relieve their brethren by sacrificing their property and their lives, were determined to effect. It gave a revolving proof, too, of the intense hatred which nerved their arms. A Zeelander, having struck down a Spaniard on the dike, knelt on his bleeding enemy, tore his heart from his bosom, fastened his teeth in it for an instant, and then threw it to a dog, with the exclamation, " 'Tis too bitter." The Spanish heart was, however, rescued, and kept for years, with the marks of the soldier's teeth upon it, a sad testimonial of the ferocity engendered by this war for national existence.

The great dike having been thus occupied, no time was lost in breaking it through in several places, a work which was accomplished under the very eyes of the enemy. The fleet sailed through the gaps, but, after their passage had been effected in good order, the admiral found, to his surprise, that it was not the only rampart to be carried. The Prince had been informed, by those who claimed to know the country, that, when once the Land-scheiding had been passed, the water would flood the country as far as Leyden, but the "Green-way," another long dike, three-quarters of a mile farther inward, now rose at least a foot above the water, to oppose their further progress. Fortunately, by a second and still more culpable carelessness, this dike had been left by the Spaniards in as

unprotected a state as the first had been. Promptly and audaciously Admiral Boisot took possession of this barrier also, leveled it in many places, and brought his flotilla in triumph over its ruins. Again, however, he was doomed to disappointment. A large mere, called the Fresh-water Lake, was known to extend itself directly in his path about midway between the Land-scheiding and the city. To this piece of water, into which he expected to have instantly floated, his only passage lay through one deep canal. The sea, which had thus far borne him on, now diffusing itself over a very wide surface, and under the influence of an adverse wind, had become too shallow for his ships. The canal alone was deep enough, but it led directly towards a bridge, strongly occupied by the enemy. Hostile troops, moreover, to the amount of three thousand, occupied both sides of the canal. The bold Boisot, nevertheless, determined to force his passage, if possible. Selecting a few of his strongest vessels, his heaviest artillery, and his bravest sailors, he led the van himself, in a desperate attempt to make his way to the mere. He opened a hot fire upon the bridge, then converted into a fortress, while his men engaged in hand-to-hand combat with a succession of skirmishers from the troops along the canal. After losing a few men and ascertaining the impregnable position of the enemy, he was obliged to withdraw, defeated, and almost despairing.

A week had elapsed since the great dike had been pierced, and the flotilla now lay motionless in shallow water, having accomplished less than two miles. The wind, too, was easterly, causing the sea rather to sink than to rise. Everything wore a gloomy aspect, when, fortunately, on the 18th, the wind shifted to the northwest, and for three days blew a gale. The waters rose rapidly, and before the second day was closed the armada was afloat again. Some fugitives from Zoetermeer village now arrived, and informed the Admiral that by making a detour to the right he could completely circumvent the bridge and the mere. They guided him, accordingly, to a comparatively low dike, which led between the villages of Zoetermeer and Bent-huyzen. A strong force of Spaniards was



stationed in each place, but seized with a panic, instead of sallying to defend the barrier, they fled inwardly towards Leyden, and halted at the village of North Aa. It was natural that they should be amazed. Nothing is more appalling to the imagination than the rising ocean tide when man feels himself within its power, and here were the waters, hourly deepening and closing around them, devouring the earth beneath their feet, while on the waves rode a flotilla, manned by a determined race, whose courage and ferocity were known throughout the world. The Spanish soldiers, brave as they were on land, were not sailors, and in the naval contests which had taken place between them and the Hollanders had been almost invariably defeated. It was not surprising in these amphibious skirmishes, where discipline was of little avail, and habitual audacity faltered at the vague dangers which encompassed them, that the foreign troops should lose their presence of mind.

Three barriers, one within the other, had now been passed, and the flotilla, advancing with the advancing waves, and driving the enemy steadily before it, was drawing nearer to the beleaguered city. As one circle after another was passed, the besieging army found itself compressed within a constantly contracting field. The *Ark of Delft*, an enormous vessel with shot-proof bulwarks, and moved by paddle-wheels turned by a crank, now arrived at Zoetermeer, and was soon followed by the whole fleet. After a brief delay, sufficient to allow the few remaining villagers to escape, both Zoetermeer and Benthuyzen, with the fortifications, were set on fire, and abandoned to their fate. The blaze lighted up the desolate and watery waste around, and was seen at Leyden, where it was hailed as the beacon of hope. Without further impediment, the armada proceeded to North Aa, the enemy retreating from this position also, and flying to Zoeterwoude, a strongly fortified village but a mile and three quarters from the city walls. It was now swarming with troops, for the bulk of the besieging army had gradually been driven into a narrow circle of forts, within the immediate neighborhood of Leyden. Besides Zoeterwoude, the two posts where they

were principally established, were *Lammen* and *Leyderdorp*, each within three hundred rods of the town. At *Leyderdorp*, were the headquarters of *Valdez*, Colonel *Borgia* commanded in the very strong fortress of *Lammen*.

The fleet was, however, delayed at North Aa by another barrier, called the "*Kirk-way*." The waters, too, spreading once more over a wider space, and diminishing under an east wind which had again arisen, no longer permitted their progress, so that very soon the whole armada was stranded anew. The waters fell to the depth of nine inches, while the vessels required eighteen and twenty Day after day the fleet lay motionless upon the shallow sea. Orange, rising from his sickbed as soon as he could stand, now came on board the fleet. His presence diffused universal joy; his words inspired his desponding army with fresh hope. He rebuked the impatient spirits who, weary of their compulsory idleness, had shown symptoms of ill-timed ferocity, and those eight hundred mad Zeelanders, so frantic in their hatred to the foreigners who had so long profaned their land, were as docile as children to the Prince. He reconnoitered the whole ground, and issued orders for the immediate destruction of the *Kirk-way*, the last important barrier which separated the fleet from Leyden. Then, after a long conference with Admiral *Boisot*, he returned to Delft.

Meantime, the besieged city was at its last gasp. The burghers had been in a state of uncertainty for many days; being aware that the fleet had set forth for their relief, but knowing full well the thousand obstacles which it had to surmount. They had guessed its progress by the illumination from the blazing villages, they had heard its salvos of artillery on its arrival at North Aa, but since then all had been dark and mournful again, hope and fear, in sickening alternation, distracting every breast. They knew that the wind was unfavorable, and at the dawn of each day every eye was turned wistfully to the vanes of the steeples. So long as the easterly breeze prevailed, they felt, as they anxiously stood on towers and housetops, that they must look in vain for the welcome ocean. Yet, while thus patiently waiting, they were literally starving,

for even the misery endured at Haarlem had not reached that depth and intensity of agony to which Leyden was now reduced. Bread, malt-cake, horseflesh, had entirely disappeared; dogs, cats, rats, and other vermin, were esteemed luxuries. A small number of cows, kept as long as possible for their milk, still remained, but a few were killed from day to day, and distributed in minute proportions, hardly sufficient to support life among the famishing population. Starving wretches swarmed daily around the shambles where these cattle were slaughtered, contending for any morsel which might fall, and lapping eagerly the blood as it ran along the pavement; while the hides, chopped and boiled, were greedily devoured. Women and children, all day long, were seen searching gutters and dunghills for morsels of food, which they disputed fiercely with the famishing dogs. The green leaves were stripped from the trees, every living herb was converted into human food, but these expedients could not avert starvation. The daily mortality was frightful—infants starved to death on the maternal breasts, which famine had parched and withered, mothers dropped dead in the streets, with their dead children in their arms. In many a house the watchmen, in their rounds, found a whole family of corpses,—father, mother, and children—side by side, for a disorder called the plague, naturally engendered of hardship and famine, now came, as if in kindness, to abridge the agony of the people. The pestilence stalked at noonday through the city, and the doomed inhabitants fell like grass beneath its scythe. From six thousand to eight thousand human beings sank before this scourge alone, yet the people resolutely held out, women and men mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foe—an evil more horrible than pest or famine.

The missives from Valdez, who saw more vividly than the besieged could do the uncertainty of his own position, now poured daily into the city, the enemy becoming more prodigal of his vows as he felt that the ocean might yet save the victims from his grasp. The inhabitants, in their ignorance, had gradually abandoned their hopes of relief, but they

spurned the summons to surrender. Leyden was sublime in its despair. A few murmurs were, however, occasionally heard at the steadfastness of the magistrates, and a dead body was placed at the door of the burgomaster as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more faint-hearted even assailed the heroic Adrian van der Werf with threats and reproaches as he passed through the streets. A crowd had gathered around him as he reached a triangular place in the center of the town, into which many of the principal streets emptied themselves, and upon one side of which stood the church of Saint Pancras, with its high brick tower surmounted by two pointed turrets, and with two ancient lime-trees at its entrance. There stood the burgomaster, a tall, haggard, imposing figure, with dark visage, and a tranquil but commanding eye. He waved his broad-leaved felt hat for silence, and then exclaimed, in language which has been almost literally preserved, "What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows and surrender the city to the Spaniards?—a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! I can die but once, whether by your hands, the enemy's, or by the hand of God. My own fate is indifferent to me, not so that of the city intrusted to my care. I know that we shall starve if not soon relieved, but starvation is preferable to the dishonored death which is the only alternative. Your menaces move me not, my life is at your disposal. Here is my sword, plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender so long as I remain alive."

The words of the stout burgomaster inspired a new courage in the hearts of those who heard him, and a shout of applause and defiance arose from the famishing but enthusiastic crowd. They left the place after exchanging new vows of fidelity with their magistrate, and again ascended tower and battlement to watch for the coming fleet. From the ramparts they hurled renewed defiance at the enemy. "Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters," they cried, "and it is true. So

long, then, as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but ourselves, be sure that we will each devour our left arms, retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in his wrath, doom us to destruction and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves forever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city and perish, men, women, and children together, in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted and our liberties to be crushed." Such words of defiance, thundered daily from the battlements, sufficiently informed Valdez as to his chance of conquering the city, either by force or fraud, but at the same time he felt comparatively relieved by the inactivity of Boisot's fleet, which still lay stranded at North Aa. "As well," shouted the Spaniards, derisively, to the citizens, "as well can the Prince of Orange pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to the walls of Leyden for your relief."

On the 28th of September, a dove flew into the city, bringing a letter from Admiral Boisot. In this despatch the position of the fleet at North Aa was described in encouraging terms, and the inhabitants were assured that, in a very few days at furthest, the long-expected relief would enter their gates. The letter was read publicly upon the marketplace, and the bells were rung for joy. Nevertheless, on the morrow the vanes pointed to the east, the waters, so far from rising, continued to sink, and Admiral Boisot was almost in despair. He wrote to the Prince, that if the spring tide, now to be expected, should not, together with a strong and favorable wind, come immediately to their relief, it would be in vain to attempt anything further, and that the expedition would of necessity be abandoned. The tempest came to their relief. A violent equinoctial gale, on the night of the 1st and of October, came storming from the northwest, shifting after a few hours full eight points, and then blowing still more violently from the southwest. The waters from the North Sea were piled in vast masses upon the southern coast of Holland, and then

dashed furiously landward, the ocean rising over the earth, and sweeping with unrestrained power across the ruined dikes.

In the course of twenty-four hours the fleet at North Aa, instead of nine inches, had more than two feet of water. No time was lost. The Kirk-way, which had been broken through according to the Prince's instructions, was now completely overflowed, and the fleet sailed at midnight, in the midst of the storm and darkness. A few sentinel vessels of the enemy challenged them as they steadily rowed toward Zoeterwoude. The answer was a flash from Boisot's cannon, lighting up the black waste of waters. There was a fierce naval midnight battle—a strange spectacle among the branches of those quiet orchards, and with chimney-stacks of half-submerged farm houses rising around the contending vessels. The neighboring village of Zoeterwoude shook with the discharges of the Zealanders' cannon, and the Spaniards assembled in that fortress knew that the rebel admiral was at last afloat and on his course. The enemy's vessels were soon sunk, their crews hurled into the waves. On went the fleet, sweeping over the broad waters which lay between Zoeterwoude and Zwieteren. As they approached some shallows which led into the great mere, the Zealanders dashed into the sea, and with sheer strength shouldered every vessel through. Two obstacles lay still in their path—the forts of Zoeterwoude and Lammern, distant from the city five hundred and two hundred and fifty yards respectively. Strong redoubts, both well supplied with troops and artillery, they were likely to give a rough reception to the light flotilla, but the panic, which had hitherto driven their foes before the advancing patriots, had reached Zoeterwoude. Hardly was the fleet in sight when the Spaniards, in the early morning, poured out from the fortress, and fled precipitately to the left, along a road which led in a westerly direction toward The Hague. Their narrow path was rapidly vanishing in the waves, and hundreds sank beneath the constantly deepening and treacherous flood. The wild Zealanders, too, sprang from their vessels upon the crumbling dike, and drove their retreating foes into the sea. They hurled their harpoons

at them, with an accuracy acquired in many a polar chase; they plunged into the waves in the keen pursuit, attacking them with boat-hook and dagger. The numbers who thus fell beneath these corsairs, who neither gave nor took quarter, were never counted, but probably not less than a thousand perished. The rest effected their escape to The Hague.

The first fortress was thus seized, dismantled, set on fire, and passed, and a few strokes of the oars brought the whole fleet close to Lammen. This last obstacle rose formidable and frowning directly across their path. Swarming as it was with soldiers, and bristling with artillery, it seemed to defy the armada either to carry it by storm or to pass under its guns into the city. It appeared that the enterprise was, after all, to founder within sight of the long expecting and expected haven. Boisot anchored his fleet within a respectful distance, and spent what remained of the day in carefully reconnoitering the fort, which seemed only too strong. In conjunction with Leyderdorp, the headquarters of Valdez, a mile and a half distant on the right, and within a mile of the city, it seemed so insuperable an impediment that Boisot wrote in despondent tone to the Prince of Orange. He announced his intention of carrying the fort, if it were possible, on the following morning, but if obliged to retreat, he observed, with something like despair, that there would be nothing for it but to wait for another gale of wind. If the waters should rise sufficiently to enable them to make a wide detour, it might be possible, if, in the meantime, Leyden did not starve or surrender, to enter its gates from the opposite side.

Meantime the citizens had grown wild with expectation. A dove had been dispatched by Boisot, informing them of his precise position, and a number of citizens accompanied the burgomaster, at nightfall, toward the tower of Hengst. "Yonder," cried the magistrate, stretching out his hand towards Lammen—"yonder, behind that fort, are bread and meat, and brethren in thousands. Shall all this be destroyed by the Spanish guns, or shall we rush to the rescue of our friends?" "We will tear the fortress to fragments with our teeth and nails," was the reply, "before

the relief, so long expected, shall be wrested from us." It was resolved that a sortie, in conjunction with the operations of Boisot, should be made against Lammen with the earliest dawn. Night descended upon the scene, a pitch dark night, full of anxiety to the Spaniards, to the armada, to Leyden. Strange sights and sounds occurred at different moments to bewilder the anxious sentinels. A long procession of lights issuing from the fort was seen to flit across the black face of the waters in the dead of night, and the whole of the city wall between the Cow-gate and the Tower of Burgundy fell with a loud crash. The horror-struck citizens thought that the Spaniards were upon them at last, the Spaniards imagined the noise to indicate a desperate sortie of the citizens. Everything was vague and mysterious.

Day dawned at length after the feverish night, and the admiral prepared for the assault. Within the fortress reigned a deathlike stillness, which inspired a sickening suspicion. Had the city, indeed, been carried in the night, had the massacre already commenced, had all this labor and audacity been expended in vain? Suddenly a man was descried wading breast-high through the water from Lammen towards the fleet, while at the same time, one solitary boy was seen to wave his cap from the summit of the fort. After a moment of doubt, the happy mystery was solved. The Spaniards had fled, panic-stricken, during the darkness. Their position would still have enabled them, with firmness, to frustrate the enterprise of the patriots, but the hand of God, which had sent the ocean and the tempest to the deliverance of Leyden, had struck her enemies with terror likewise. The lights which had been seen moving during the night were the lanterns of the retreating Spaniards, and the boy who was now waving his triumphant signal from the battlements had alone witnessed the spectacle. So confident was he in the conclusion to which it led him that he had volunteered at daybreak to go thither all alone. The magistrates, fearing a trap, hesitated for a moment to believe the truth, which soon, however, became quite evident. Valdez, flying himself from Leyderdorp, had ordered Colonel Borgia to retire with all his troops from

Lammen. Thus the Spaniards had retreated at the very moment that an extraordinary accident had laid bare a whole side of the city for their entrance. The noise of the wall, as it fell, only inspired them with fresh alarm; for they believed that the citizens had sallied forth in the darkness to aid the advancing flood in the work of destruction. All obstacles being now removed, the fleet of Boisot swept by Lammen, and entered the city on the morning of the 3d of October. Leyden was relieved.

The quays were lined with the famishing population, as the fleet rowed through the canals, every human being who could stand, coming forth to greet the preservers of the city. Bread was thrown from every vessel among the crowd. The poor creatures who for two months had tasted no wholesome human food, and who had literally been living within the jaws of death, snatched eagerly the blessed gift, at last too liberally bestowed. Many choked themselves to death in the greediness with which they devoured their bread, others became ill with the effects of plenty thus suddenly succeeding starvation,—but these were isolated cases, a repetition of which was prevented. The admiral, stepping ashore, was welcomed by the magistracy, and a solemn procession was immediately formed. Magistrates and citizens, wild Zeelanders, emaciated burgher guards, sailors, soldiers, women, children,—nearly every living person within the walls—all repaired without delay to the great church, stout Admiral Boisot leading the way. The starving and heroic city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly king, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of kings. After prayers the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to

carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for utterance. The hymn was abruptly suspended, while the multitude wept like children. This scene of honest pathos terminated, the necessary measures for distributing the food and for relieving the sick were taken by the magistracy. A note dispatched to the Prince of Orange, was received by him at two o'clock, as he sat in church at Delft. It was of a somewhat different purport from that of the letter which he had received early in the same day from Boisot—the letter in which the admiral had informed him that the success of the enterprise depended, after all, upon the desperate assault upon a nearly impregnable fort. The joy of the Prince may be easily imagined, and so soon as the sermon was concluded, he handed the letter just received to the minister, to be read to the congregation. Thus, all participated in his joy, and united with him in thanksgiving.

The next day, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of his friends, who were anxious lest his life should be endangered by breathing, in his scarcely convalescent state, the air of the city where so many thousands had been dying of the pestilence, the Prince repaired to Leyden. He, at least, had never doubted his own or his country's fortune. They could, therefore, most sincerely congratulate each other, now that the victory had been achieved. "If we are doomed to perish," he had said a little before the commencement of the siege, "in the name of God, be it so! At any rate; we shall have the honor to have done what no nation ever did before us, that of having defended and maintained ourselves, unaided, in so small a country, against the tremendous efforts of such powerful enemies. . . ."

1823 ~ *Francis Parkman* ~ 1893

FRANCIS PARKMAN still ranks as America's leading historian. He was born in Boston, September 16, 1823. His father was a Unitarian minister of old colonial stock; his mother a descendant of John Cotton. He was of delicate constitution as a child and was sent to private rather than public schools. In 1840 he entered Harvard, from which he was graduated in 1844 with Phi Beta Kappa honors. Much of his senior year he spent in Europe, returning only in time for his degree. At his father's request he studied law, but gave it up after two years in favor of his greater interest, American history. Outdoor life, the wilderness, the woods, and historic places had always attracted him, and in order to study the Indians and to improve his health, he spent the summer of 1846, accompanied by his cousin Quincy Shaw, with the Dakota Sioux tribe in the Black Hills and on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains. During part of the five-months' trip he lived in the lodge of a Dakota chief, and he came to know primitive Indians at firsthand in the days when western savages were untouched by civilization. His health, however, was harmed rather than improved by the hardships, exposure, and poor food, his constitution was weakened, and eye trouble began. From this time onward he was a partial invalid, the rest of his life being a struggle for health and eyesight. He never regained full use of his eyes but worked through readers and secretaries. His first and most popular book, *The California and Oregon Trail* (1849), was dictated to the cousin who accompanied him on his trip.

In 1851, at the age of twenty-six, he published his second book, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*. At one time he turned his attention to horticulture and became president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and professor of horticulture at Harvard in 1871, but his chief concern was still with his historical writing. While still a sophomore at Harvard, he had planned to write of the old French wars, and later he enlarged his plan. After 1866 he devoted himself to this *magnum opus*, a series of works on France and England in the New World. He found the material for his field more available than had Prescott and Motley for theirs, and despite handicaps he poured out a great flow of books which still rank as the greatest achievement of an American historian. He went to Europe to consult documents and visited the scenes of the American conflicts, especially those along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. He died, November 8, 1893.

Parkman treats his subject, the clash of rival civilizations for the New World, so that his works read like historical romance. He tried for truth and thoroughness and his accounts remain substantially valid; but he writes as a literary man and an

artist. The emphasis is on dramatic episodes, salient characters, and pageantry; his view of the past is idealistic. His early interest in the American forest remained, and the vast stretch of primeval wilderness once covering much of the continent serves for a background as his volumes take him geographically westward. His narrative style is simple, straightforward, and clear-flowing. He has a rich, sonorous vocabulary, dramatic force, and vivid powers of description, and his accounts of fierce conflicts and his pictures of beautiful scenery grip the imagination. He sought detachment and impartiality and he treats his sources with careful accuracy. New England happenings loom, however, disproportionately large in his pages. Later research has added to his results and modern historians miss in his work recognition of many problems of interest. Land speculation, Canadian society under French rule, anthropological lore of the Indians, and the like, he leaves almost untouched.

The historical writings of Parkman may be found in the Champlain Edition (20 vols., 1897-98), and in the New Library Edition (12 vols., 1902). There is no collected edition of his writings. *The California and Oregon Trail* was issued serially in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, 1847, and first printed in book form in 1849. Parkman published a novel, *Vassall Morton*, in 1856. His great work, *France and England in North America*, included *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* (1851), *Pioneers of France in the New World* (1865), *The Jesuits in North America* (1867), *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West* (1869), *The Old Régime in Canada* (1874), *Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV* (1877), *Montcalm and Wolfe* (2 vols., 1884), and *A Half-Century of Conflict* (2 vols., 1892). D. C. Seitz annotated *Letters of Francis Parkman to E. G. Squier* (1911). *Letters from Francis Parkman to Pierre Margry* appeared as No. 8 in *Smith College Studies in History*, April-July, 1923. For selections, comprehensive introduction, and bibliography, see W. L. Schramm, ed., *Parkman*, in *American Writers Series* (1938).

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#### From LA SALLE AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE GREAT WEST

By the Great West Parkman refers to the "valleys of the Mississippi and the Lakes." This work is concerned with the youth and early career of La Salle, his discovery of the Ohio and descent of the Illinois, his relation to the Jesuits, his experiences on the upper lakes and on the Illinois

with Indian tribes, his successful descent of the Mississippi, and his later experiences in Louisiana and Texas.

#### CHAPTER XX

#### *Success of La Salle: 1681-1682*

THE season was far advanced. On the bare limbs of the forest hung a few withered remnants of its gay autumnal livery, and the smoke crept upward through the sullen No-

umber air from the squalid wigwams of La Salle's Abenaki and Mohegan allies. These, his new friends, were savages whose midnight yells had startled the border hamlets of New England, who had danced around Puritan scalps, and whom Puritan imaginations painted as incarnate fiends. La Salle chose eighteen of them, whom he added to the twenty-three Frenchmen who remained with him, some of the rest having deserted and others lagged behind. The Indians insisted on taking their squaws with them. These were ten in number, besides three children, and thus the expedition included fifty-four persons, of whom some were useless, and others a burden.

On the 21st of December, Tonty and Membré set out from Fort Miami with some of the party in six canoes, and crossed to the little river Chicago. La Salle, with the rest of the men, joined them a few days later. It was the dead of winter, and the streams were frozen. They made sledges, placed on them the canoes, the baggage, and a disabled Frenchman, crossed from the Chicago to the northern branch of the Illinois, and filed in a long procession down its frozen course. They reached the site of the great Illinois village, found it tenantless, and continued their journey, still dragging their canoes, till at length they reached open water below Lake Peoria.

La Salle had abandoned for a time his original plan of building a vessel for the navigation of the Mississippi. Bitter experience had taught him the difficulty of the attempt, and he resolved to trust to his canoes alone. They embarked again, floating prosperously down between the leafless forests that flanked the tranquil river, till, on the sixth of February, they issued upon the majestic bosom of the Mississippi. Here, for the time, their progress was stopped, for the river was full of floating ice. La Salle's Indians, too, had lagged behind, but, within a week, all had arrived, the navigation was once more free, and they resumed their course. Towards evening, they saw on their right the mouth of a great river, and the clear current was invaded by the headlong torrent of the Missouri, opaque with mud. They built their campfires in the neighboring forest, and at daylight, embarking anew on the dark and mighty stream, drifted swiftly down

towards unknown destinies. They passed a deserted town of the Tamaroas,<sup>1</sup> saw, three days after, the mouth of the Ohio; and, gliding by the wastes of bordering swamp, landed on the twenty-fourth of February near the Third Chickasaw Bluffs. They encamped, and the hunters went out for game. All returned, excepting Pierre Prudhomme, and, as the others had seen fresh tracks of Indians, La Salle feared that he was killed. While some of his followers built a small stockade fort on a high bluff by the river, others ranged the woods in pursuit of the missing hunter. After six days of ceaseless and fruitless search, they met two Chickasaw Indians in the forest, and, through them, La Salle sent presents and peace-messages to that warlike people, whose villages were a few days' journey distant. Several days later, Prudhomme was found, and brought in to the camp, half-dead. He had lost his way while hunting, and, to console him for his woes, La Salle christened the newly built fort with his name, and left him, with a few others, in charge of it.

Again they embarked, and, with every stage of their adventurous progress, the mystery of this vast New World was more and more unveiled. More and more they entered the realms of spring. The hazy sunlight, the warm and drowsy air, the tender foliage, the opening flowers, betokened the reviving life of Nature. For several days more they followed the windings of the great river, on its tortuous course through wastes of swamp and canebrake, till on the thirteenth of March they found themselves wrapped in a thick fog. Neither shore was visible, but they heard on the right the booming of an Indian drum and the shrill outcries of the war-dance. La Salle at once crossed to the opposite side, where, in less than an hour, his men threw up a rude fort of felled trees. Meanwhile, the fog cleared, and, from the farther bank, the astonished Indians saw the strange visitors at their work. Some of the French advanced to the edge of the water, and beckoned them to come over. Several of them approached, in a wooden canoe, to within the distance of a gunshot. La Salle displayed the calumet, and sent a

<sup>1</sup> Indians of an Algonkian tribe of the Illinois confederacy. Now extinct.



Frenchman to meet them. He was well received; and, the friendly mood of the Indians being now apparent, the whole party crossed the river

On landing, they found themselves at a town of the Kappa band of the Arkansas, a people dwelling near the mouth of the river which bears their name. "The whole village," writes Membré to his superior, "came down to the shore to meet us, except the women, who had run off. I cannot tell you the civility and kindness we received from these barbarians, who brought us poles to make huts, supplied us with firewood during the three days we were among them, and took turns in feasting us. But, my Reverend Father, this gives no idea of the good qualities of these savages, who are gay, civil, and freehearted. The young men, though the most alert and spirited we had seen, are nevertheless so modest that not one of them would take the liberty to enter our hut, but all stood quietly at the door. They are so well formed that we were in admiration at their beauty. We did not lose the value of a pin while we were among them."

Various were the dances and ceremonies with which they entertained the strangers, who, on their part, responded with a solemnity which their hosts would have liked less, if they had understood it better. La Salle and Tonty, at the head of their followers, marched to the open area in the midst of the village. Here, to the admiration of the gazing crowd of warriors, women, and children, a cross was raised bearing the arms of France. Membré, in canonicals, sang a hymn, the men shouted *Vive le Roi*, and La Salle, in the king's name, took formal possession of the country. The friar, not, he flatters himself, without success, labored to expound by signs the mysteries of the Faith, while La Salle, by methods equally satisfactory, drew from the chief an acknowledgment of fealty to Louis XIV.

After touching at several other towns of this people, the voyagers resumed their course, guided by two of the Arkansas, passed the sites, since become historic, of Vicksburg and Grand Gulf, and, about three hundred miles below the Arkansas, stopped by the edge of a swamp on the western side of the river. Here, as their two guides told them, was the path

to the great town of the Taensas.<sup>1</sup> Tonty and Membré were sent to visit it. They and their men shouldered their burch canoe through the swamp, and launched it on a lake which had once formed a portion of the channel of the river. In two hours, they reached the town, and Tonty gazed at it with astonishment. He had seen nothing like it in America: large square dwellings, built of sun-baked mud mixed with straw, arched over with a dome-shaped roof of canes, and placed in regular order around an open area. Two of them were larger and better than the rest. One was the lodge of the chief, the other was the temple, or house of the sun. They entered the former, and found a single room, forty feet square, where, in the dim light,—for there was no opening but the door,—the chief sat awaiting them on a sort of bedstead, three of his wives at his side, while sixty old men, wrapped in white cloaks woven of mulberry-bark, formed his divan. When he spoke, his wives howled to do him honor; and the assembled councillors listened with the reverence due to a potentate for whom, at his death, a hundred victims were to be sacrificed. He received the visitors graciously, and joyfully accepted the gifts which Tonty laid before him. This interview over, the Frenchmen repaired to the temple, wherein were kept the bones of the departed chiefs. In construction, it was much like the royal dwelling. Over it were rude wooden figures, representing three eagles turned towards the east. A strong mud wall surrounded it, planted with stakes, on which were stuck the skulls of enemies sacrificed to the Sun, while before the door was a block of wood, on which lay a large shell surrounded with the braided hair of the victims. The interior was rude as a barn, dimly lighted from the doorway, and full of smoke. There was a structure in the middle which Membré thinks was a kind of altar; and before it burned a perpetual fire, fed with three logs laid end to end, and watched by two old men devoted to this sacred office. There was a mysterious recess, too, which the strangers were forbidden to explore, but which, as Tonty was told, contained the riches of the nation, consisting of pearls from the Gulf, and trinkets

<sup>1</sup> Indians of a tribe in Louisiana.

obtained, probably through other tribes, from the Spaniards and other Europeans

The chief condescended to visit La Salle at his camp; a favor which he would by no means have granted, had the visitors been Indians. A master of ceremonies and six attendants preceded him, to clear the path and prepare the place of meeting. When all was ready, he was seen advancing, clothed in a white robe, and preceded by two men bearing white fans, while a third displayed a disk of burnished copper, doubtless to represent the Sun, his ancestor, or, as others will have it, his elder brother. His aspect was marvellously grave, and he and La Salle met with gestures of ceremonious courtesy. The interview was very friendly, and the chief returned well pleased with the gifts which his entertainer bestowed on him, and which, indeed, had been the principal motive of his visit

On the next morning, as they descended the river, they saw a wooden canoe full of Indians; and Tonty gave chase. He had nearly overtaken it, when more than a hundred men appeared suddenly on the shore, with bows bent to defend their countrymen. La Salle called out to Tonty to withdraw. He obeyed, and the whole party encamped on the opposite bank. Tonty offered to cross the river with a peace-pipe, and set out accordingly with a small party of men. When he landed, the Indians made signs of friendship by joining their hands,—a proceeding by which Tonty, having but one hand, was somewhat embarrassed, but he directed his men to respond in his stead. La Salle and Membré now joined him, and went with the Indians to their village, three leagues distant. Here they spent the night. "The *Sieur de la Salle*," writes Membré, "whose very air, engaging manners, tact, and address attract love and respect alike, produced such an effect on the hearts of these people that they did not know how to treat us well enough"

The Indians of this village were the Natchez; and their chief was brother of the great chief, or Sun, of the whole nation. His town was several leagues distant, near the site of the city of Natchez, and thither the French repaired to visit him. They saw what they had already seen among the Taensas,—a religious

and political despotism, a privileged caste descended from the sun, a temple, and a sacred fire. La Salle planted a large cross, with the arms of France attached, in the midst of the town, while the inhabitants looked on with a satisfaction which they would hardly have displayed, had they understood the meaning of the act.

The French next visited the Coroas,<sup>1</sup> at their village, two leagues below, and here they found a reception no less auspicious. On the thirty-first of March, as they approached Red River, they passed in the fog a town of the Oumas, and, three days later, discovered a party of fishermen, in wooden canoes, among the canes along the margin of the water. They fled at sight of the Frenchmen. La Salle sent men to reconnoitre, who, as they struggled through the marsh, were greeted with a shower of arrows, while, from the neighboring village of the Quinipissas, invisible behind the canebrake, they heard the sound of an Indian drum and the whoops of the mustering warriors. La Salle, anxious to keep the peace with all the tribes along the river, recalled his men, and pursued his voyage. A few leagues below, they saw a cluster of Indian lodges on the left bank, apparently void of inhabitants. They landed, and found three of them filled with corpses. It was a village of the Tangibao, sacked by their enemies only a few days before.

And now they neared their journey's end. On the sixth of April, the river divided itself into three broad channels. La Salle followed that of the west, and D'Autray that of the east; while Tonty took the middle passage. As he drifted down the turbid current, between the low and marshy shores, the brackish water changed to brine, and the breeze grew fresh with the salt breath of the sea. Then the broad bosom of the great Gulf opened on his sight, tossing its restless billows, limitless, voiceless, lonely as when born of chaos, without a sail, without a sign of life.

La Salle, in a canoe, coasted the marshy borders of the sea, and then the reunited parties assembled on a spot of dry ground, a short distance above the mouth of the river.

<sup>1</sup> These, and other Indians mentioned in this paragraph belonged to minor tribes.

Here a column was made ready, bearing the arms of France, and inscribed with the words,—

LOUIS LE GRAND, ROY DE  
FRANCE ET DE NAVARRE,  
RÈGNE; LE NEUVIÈME  
AVRIL, 1682<sup>1</sup>

The Frenchmen were mustered under arms; and, while the New England Indians and their squaws looked on in wondering silence, they chanted the *Te Deum*, the *Exaudiat*, and the *Domine satvum fac Regem*. Then, amid volleys of musketry and shouts of *Vive le Roi*, La Salle planted the column in its place, and, standing near it, proclaimed in a loud voice,—

"In the name of the most high, mighty, invincible, and victorious Prince, Louis the Great, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, Fourteenth of that name, I, this ninth day of April, one thousand six hundred and eighty-two, in virtue of the commission of his Majesty, which I hold in my hand, and which may be seen by all whom it may concern, have taken, and do now take, in the name of his Majesty and of his successors to the crown, possession of this country of Louisiana, the seas, harbors, ports, bays, adjacent straits, and all the nations, peoples, provinces, cities, towns, villages, mines, minerals, fisheries, streams, and rivers, within the extent of the said Louisiana, from the mouth of the great river St. Louis, otherwise called the Ohio, . . . as also along the river Colbert, or Mississippi, and the rivers which discharge themselves thereinto, from its source beyond the country of the Nadouessioux . . . as far as its mouth at the sea, or Gulf of Mexico, and also to the mouth of the River of Palms, upon

the assurance we have had from the natives of these countries, that we are the first Europeans who have descended or ascended the said river Colbert, hereby protesting against all who may hereafter undertake to invade any or all of these aforesaid countries, peoples, or lands, to the prejudice of the rights of his Majesty, acquired by the consent of the nations dwelling herem. Of which, and of all else that is needful, I hereby take to witness those who hear me, and demand an act of the notary here present "

Shouts of *Vive le Roi* and volleys of musketry responded to his words. Then a cross was planted beside the column, and a leaden plate buried near it, bearing the arms of France, with a Latin inscription, *Ludovicus Magnus regnat*.<sup>1</sup> The weather-beaten voyagers joined their voices in the grand hymn of the *Vexilla Regis*.<sup>2</sup> —

"The banners of Heaven's King advance,  
The mystery of the Cross shines forth";

and renewed shouts of *Vive le Roi* closed the ceremony

On that day, the realm of France received on parchment a stupendous accession. The fertile plains of Texas, the vast basin of the Mississippi, from its frozen northern springs to the sultry borders of the Gulf, from the woody ridges of the Alleghamies to the bare peaks of the Rocky Mountains,—a region of savannahs and forests, sun-cracked deserts, and grassy prairies, watered by a thousand rivers, ranged by a thousand warlike tribes, passed beneath the scepter of the Sultan of Versailles; and all by virtue of a feeble human voice, inaudible at half a mile

1869

<sup>1</sup> "Louis the Great, King of France and Navarre, reigns; April 9, 1682"

<sup>1</sup> "Louis the Great reigns."

<sup>2</sup> "Banners of the King."

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